॥ ज्ञानेश्वरी ॥

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FOREWORD

Shri Jnaneshwar, the well-known saint of Maharashtra, was not only a realised soul but a gifted poet. At a very early age, he wrote his masterpiece, the Jnaneshwari, a commentary on the Gita in Marathi in exquisite poetry. He has explained the Gita not by recourse to rational arguments but by the profuse use of similes, metaphors and illustrations. Initiated into the Natha Sampradaya by his elder brother Nivrittinatha, disciple of Gahininatha, he assimilated, in his later life, the non-dual jnana of Vedanta and the pure bhakti of the Bhagawata Dharma. In his Jnaneshwari, he calls the Gita the literary image of Lord Krishna. Indeed one can say that his Jnaneshwari is the literary image of his knowledge and experience.

Like Sri Shankaracharya, he was an advaita-vadin, a non-duellist. He explains verse IX. 12 of the Gita as follows:

"The Lord says, although I am formless, without limiting conditions, inactive, beyond the qualities, changeless and all-pervasive, ignorant people ascribe to Me form, limitations, actions, qualities, and a definite place. Although I am - unmanifest. desireless and devoid of action and enjoyment, they think of Me as manifest, full of desires, agent and enjoyer. They impute to Me hands and feet, eyes and ears, caste and family, although I do not possess them. Even though I am self-existent, they make idols of Me and instal them with proper rites of consecration, and though I am all-pervading, they invite Me with an innovation and bid farewell to Me with an immersion. They worship an idol as a form of divinity and later throw away the broken idol as worthless. They thus impute to Me human attributes."

Sri Jnaneshwar says that true knowledge consists in knowing God in the non-dual form and that devotion should culminate in Advaita bhakti. The devotee should realise God as all-pervasive; and wherever he casts his eyes, he should see God therein. This shows that Sri Jnaneshwar had become a Jnani-Bhakta of the highest order as described in the Gita (Verse.VII. 17).

Although he was born in a village, Alandi, about 20 Kms. from Pune, he is worshipped all over Maharashtra as Mauli (Mother) by a large number of devotees. The members of the Warkari Sampradaya have kept the lamp of devotion burning in Maharashtra. Shree Jnaneshwar says that every-one should perform his duty as a yajna and offer his or her actions as flowers at the feet of God. This message is as relevant today as seven

hundred years ago, and deserves to be known not only in this country but also all over the world. In the meantime, the Marathi Language has undergone changes and even the Marathi -speaking people today find the Jnaneshwari unintelligible. So, a translation of Jnaneshwari in modern Marathi was also a need of the time. I am sure that the lucid translation of Shri Yardi, in modern Marathi, Hindi, and English will supply this long-felt want. This is a fitting tribute to a saint who regarded the whole world as his home he visiwachi majhe ghara. I congratulate the Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan for bringing out these books in the seventh centenary year of the Jnaneshwar. Ramkrishna Math Hyderabad – 500029 ' Swami Ranganathananda 9 February, 1991.

PREFACE

Shri Jnaneshwar was a great poet-saint of Maharashtra, who lived in the 13th Century. He was born at Alandi, a town near Poona, in 1271 A.D. and took Sanjivant Samadhi when he was only twenty-two years old. As the sun sheds his light before he rises, he attained self-realisation in his young age. As stated by him his intelligence matured as a result of the austerity of truthfulness practised by him in his former births. He wrote such excellent works as Jnaneshwari, Amritanubhava, Changdeva-Pasashti and devotional songs (*abhangas*). His commentary Bhavarthadipika, popularly known as Jnaneshwari is a precious gem of the Marathi language. In this work he has explained an abstruse subject like the Vedanta in lucid words by the use of appropriate similes, metaphors and illustrations. But many changes have taken place in the vocabulary and the style of Marathi language since then, as a result of which this work has become unintelligible to even the Marathi speaking people. An attempt has been made to translate it in prose, which is easy to understand, without disturbing its character as a dialogue. A translation of Gita in Marathi in the same metre has been given so that those who do not know Sanskrit will also understand the doctrine and yoga of the Gita.

Even though Shri Jnaneshwar was born in Maharashtra, he had the conviction that he belonged to the whole world, he wishwa chi majhe ghara. In order that this work should be known everywhere, I have translated it in simple Hindi and English. It was my strong desire that these translations should be completed during this seventh centenary year of the composition of Jnaneshwari and this desire has been fulfilled by his grace.

The Jnaneshwari, like the Gita, is a superb philosophical poem. Shri Jnaneshwar declares that philosophical poem. Shri Jnaneshwar declares that by his words he will give form to the formless and make the senses enjoy what is beyond them. He says that his diction is such as will excel nectar with a wager. He states that he has used such words that they will lead to quarrels among the senses. The ears will have tongues to relish their savour. The tongue will say that the word is its object. The ears will wish to smell them. The eyes will say that the store of form has opened out for them. When a sentence becomes complete the mind will go forward to embrace it. The devotees of Jnaneshwar, therefore, while appreciating the beauties of his poetry, are likely to miss its import, but since Jnaneshwari is a religious text, only those who will become introspective and experience it even in a small way will achieve bliss. As Shri Namadeva has said, one should experience at least one *ovi.* But

many of his devotees take pleasure in the literary merits of his work. It is, however, essential that after appreciating the poetry, one should try to understand his philosophy. One ought, therefore, to reflect over the thoughts expressed by Shri Jnaneshwar. It is hoped that this translation will make such reflection easy.

Critical Edition of Jnaneshwari

The last volume of the Critical Edition of the Mahabharata undertaken by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute was published in 1968. But it is a pity that even in the year 1990 we do not have a critical edition of Jnaneshwari. The late Prof. S. N. Banahatti had made an Attempt to bring out such an edition and had collected many printed and hand-written manuscripts for that purpose.[1] He published the critical edition of the twelfth chapter 1n 1967, giving the different readings. But this work could not be finished due to his premature death.

Prof. Banahatti had sought the views of his scholar friends as to how he should set about this work. While most of them accepted the need of such an edition, there were two divergent views as to how it should be prepared. One view was that the oldest manuscript should be taken as the vulgate and the divergent readings in the other manuscripts should be recorded in notes on the same page. The other view was that a critical edition should be prepared by comparing and examining the divergent readings and by adopting those readings which are determined as the oldest by the application of appropriate tests. The late Prof. V.S. Sukthankar, who was the. First to undertake the work of bringing out a critical edition of the Adiparva of Mahabharata has discussed what tests should be applied in his Prolegomena to that Parva. As regards the first method, both V.K. Rajawade and S.V. Dandekar who belonged to the Warkari sect claimed that the manuscripts secured by them were the oldest. There are two objections to adopting the first view. It is very difficult to decide which is the oldest manuscript as different opinions may be held on that matter. And even 1f it is possible to decide about the oldest manuscript, it will be a mistake to regard it as the original, unless one can settle that the author or his direct disciple wrote it.

[1. Prof. Banahatti. Shri Jananadevi (Adhyaya barava), (in Marathi) Pune. 1967.]

Prof. Banhatti, after considering these two views, decided to bring out a critical edition and this was a proper decision. This is not the first time that such an attempt was made. The first critical editor of Jnaneshwari was Saint Eknath of Paithan (Aurangabad district). He says that he had determined the correct readings after collecting manuscripts and comparing them with one another. After him his contemporary Bhaskar,

disciple of Raghunath, restored the Jnaneshwari, but his manuscript has not become available. It has a special importance as it was written within a period of thirty years after the death of Shri Eknath. After this in the seventeenth century, Shri Gopalashramaswami brought out his edition. He was a great devotee and had great veneration for Shri. Eknath. He states that he has chosen the most ancient readings. It seems that he had collected a number of manuscripts and determined the readings. But he has not mentioned how many books he had collated or the different readings, which he did not. Accept. So his edition too cannot be called a critical edition.

Prof. Banahatti has determined four traditions of Jnaneshwari, l. Ekanatha, 2. Patangana, 3. Siddhanatha and Barave. At the end of the manuscripts of Ekanathi tradition, there are three to five ovis, which state that it is the edition. Prepared by Saint Eknath. The manuscript. Patangana traditions do not contain any outward indication. Prof. Banahatti has given this name to 1t, as three out of four manuscripts wen recovered from the Patangana temple in Beed district. The Siddhanatha and Barave tradition: have been named so because these names are mentioned at the end of the manuscripts. Those manuscripts, which do not belong to any of these traditions, have been styled as independent.

It is not proper to classify the traditions on the basis of the names occurring at the end of the manuscripts; for Prof. Banahatti himself states that the readings in the Shaligram Ms. and Barave Ms. agree with those of the Mss. in the Ekanathi tradition. The readings in the Ashtekar Ms., Tanjavar Barve Ms. and Bhandarkar No.2 Ms. also agree mostly with the Mss. in the Ekanatha tradition. Therefore it would be reasonable to include the above three Mss. also in the Ekanathi tradition. Now there remain the Vipra Ms., Bharata Itihasa Saimshodhaka Mandala Kulkarni Ms. of the Siddhanath tradition, the Bhandarkar Ms. No. 1 and Jalgiri Ms. of the so-called independent tradition. About the Kulkarni Ms., Prof. Banahatti says that many of its readings tally with those of Bhandarkar Ms. No. 1 or the Patangana tradition. The Bhandarkar Ms. No. 1 contains a medley of readings from the Mss of Ekanathi tradition and other tradition. The readings in the Jalgiri Ms. agree with those of the Ekanatha tradition, but at many places they agree with the Patangana tradition also. So these four Mss. too cannot be categorised as an independent tradition.

Thus it appears that there were only two independent traditions: 1. The Ekanath tradition and 2. The Patangana tradition. By a strange coincidence, the second tradition also' was started by another Ekanath. As there was the famous Saint Ekanath at Paithan, at the same time there was a second Ekanathswami in Beed district in Marathawada. Saint Ekanatha of Paithan was a devotee of Shri Datta, while the Ekanathswami of Beed was a votary of Shri Ganesha. A second coincidence was that the

name of Ekanathswami's Guru was also Jani Janardana. The place of Jani Janardanaswami in Beed is well known as Patangana. Ekanathaswami also took the pen name Eka Janardani and had authored many works. He had also written a commentary on the eleventh skandha of Bhagavata like Saint Ekanath of Paithan.[2] Jani Janardanaswami belonged to the Natha Sampradaya and so it is natural that his disciples regarded Jnaneshwari as his own. The three Mss. out of four Mss. who belong to the Patangana tradition have internal similarity and its language looks more antiquated than that of Ekanath Mss. and seems to belong to the time of Jnaneshwar.

Thus there are two recessions of Jnaneshwari. In copying a Ms. there occur unintentional changes, which are due to inadvertence, inattention or misunderstanding. But some changes are deliberate because of the changes in the language, the tendency to simplification or to make the language flowery or more attractive. If the changes, which take place, are accidental, then it becomes possible to discover the genuine readings by applying scientific tests. But it would not be wrong to state that 1n the Ekanath Mss. attempts seem to have been made to bring about the simplification and modernisation of the original readings. The Ekanatha manuscripts can, therefore, be utilised to determine the Ms. as edited by Saint Ekanatha. For this purpose, one can use the Mss. belonging to the Paithan tradition, and all the Mss., which have a strong similarity to them such as the Shaligram Ms. the Barave Ms., No.2. It is necessary to determine the Ms. as edited by Saint Ekanatha as his Ms. is accepted by all and is easily comprehensible to all.

[2. G. D. Khanolkar. ed. Marathi Vanmayakosh. Vol. I, (Marathi) Bombay 1977.]

But it is possible to prepare a critical edition of the original Jnaneshwari by examining the four Mss. of the Patangana tradition. the Vipra Ms, the Bharata Itihasa Sanshodhaka Mandala Kulkarni Ms, Bhandarkar Ms. No. 1 and Jalgiri Ms. I fully endorse the wish which Bhaskara had expressed that the Maharashtrians should become disposed to undertake research into the original ovis of Jnaneshwari and make an attempt to reach the original ovis. I would suggest very humbly that the Jnanadeva Adhyasana set up by the Poona University should undertake this work.

The Life of Jnaneshwar

As we have not got a critical Edition of the Jnaneshwari, it is sad to state that a historical biography of Shri Jnaneshwar is also not available. All the accounts of his life have been written on the basis of the three chapters in the Namdeva Gatha (collection of Abhangas), entitled Adi, tirthavali and Samadhi. It is nature that the old biographers of Shri Jnaneshwara should

take recourse to these chapters, which are imbued with his divine character. Mahipatabua, a biographer of saints in the times of the Peshwas and Niranjana Madhava, the author of Jnaneshwar – vijaya (Triumphs of Shri Jnaneshwar) have written their lives of Shri Jnaneshwar on the basis of these three chapters. The late Shri Pangarkar also has said in h1s introduction to his biography of Shri Jnaneshwar that he has made use of these three chapters. But the late Prof. S. V. Dandekar, though he belonged to the Warkari sect, has also given this traditional account without a cortical examination of its authenticity. Many scholars of Jnaneshwari such as Bhave, Pangarkar, Tulpule had suggested the possibility of interpolations in the Namdeva Gatha; but Shri R.C. Dhere, a well-known Marathi scholar, has established on the basis of the evidence collected by him that the Namdeva Gatha contains, 1n addition to the hymns (Abhangas) of Namadeva, the contemporary of Jnaneshwar, the hymns written by his other namesakes such as Vishnudas Nama [3]. In the versified Shukakhyana, it is mentioned that this work was completed on the new moon day of the Pausha month in the sanvatsara named Manmatha. Although there is no mention of Shalivahanashaka in this, on the basis of the details given, Pandit Panduranga Shastri [4]

[6. Ibid, p. 49]

formalities to one devoid of limiting condition, actions to the inactive, qualities to the qualityless and a location location to the all-pervasive. They attribute manifestation to the unmanifest and desires to the desireless and speak of him as agent and experiencer though he is not so. The Lord says.' They ascribe to Me caste though I am casteless and feet, hands. ears, eyes, lineage and habitation, though I do not possess any of these. Although I am self-existent, they make an idol of Me and consecrate it and although I pervade everything they invoke Me and dismiss Me. Thus making an idol of Me, they worship it and when it breaks they throw it away. In fact they ascribe to Me all the human qualities of Such is their false knowledge which comes in the way of true knowledge (Ovis 155- 170)". Thus the doctrine of Jnaneshwar 1s different from the qualified monism, dualism and pure non-dualism which held that the Supreme Self possesses auspicious attributes. In this regard the philosophy of Shri Jnaneshwar is close to the monism of Shri Shankara.

But even though Shri Shankara's doctrine of Brahman as the reality (Brahma Satyam) was acceptable to Shri Jnaneshwar, 1t is doubtful whether he accepted his doctrine of the unreality of the world {jagan mithya). While talking of the Supreme Self, Shri Jnaneshwar employs such terms as Omni-present (vishwarupa), having the form of the universe (vishvakara), soul of the universe (vishvatman), Lord of the universe (vishwesha), existing in all forms (vishuamurti), pervader of the universe (vishvavyapaka) and the Lord of the goddess of wealth in the form of the

universe. By the will of this Supreme person, says Shri Jnaneshwar. the world comes into being (Ch. 6 Ovi 177). The Lord says, "The petals of the flower constitute the flower, and branches fruits, etc. constitute the tree and this whole universe 1s of the same form as Myself (Ch. 14, 177). So it is not that my devotee should realise Me after the world vanishes, but he should apprehend Me along with the world (14.380). Just as the rays of-the Sun are not different from the Sun, so there is unity between God and universe." The devotion, which is offered to Him with the knowledge of this unity, is known as non-dual bhakti. When a person attains full knowledge as a sthitaprajna or a jnani- bhakta, he does not experience that the world 1s unreal. On the other hand, the sthitaprajna becomes one with the world after he renounces egoism and all sense-objects (2.267). The Jnanibhakta becomes free from the notion of dualism and experiences that he has become one with the universe (12. 191).

Shri Jnaneshwar holds that even if the world is real, the world appearance 1s not real. Just as one has the false notion of a serpent in a necklace or of silver in the shell, so is this world appearance, and it comes in the way of true knowledge (15.46) But it does not last before knowledge and at the beginning of the sixteenth chapter Shri Jnaneshwar praises his preceptor as one who dispels this world appearance. But Shri Jnaneshwar did not accept the doctrine that this world is the play of the Supreme (chidvilasa) like Shri Ramanuja, who regards the visible world too as real, being the play of the Supreme Person.

The Shankara-bhashya and Jnaneshwari also differ in their view as to which yoga is considered more important in the Gita. Shri Shankara regards the yoga of knowledge as primary with both the yoga of. action and the yoga of devotion as subsidiary and supportive to it. He states that the seeker attains liberation in the following order: purification of the mind through karmayoga, renunciation, the way of knowledge, and self-realisation. In the opinion of Shri Jnaneshwar all the methods of yoga are equally valid and one has to adopt the yoga accordingly to his aptitude. Shri Jnaneshwar, while commenting on the yoga of meditation in the sixth chapter, has expounded the yoga of Kundalini and extolled it as pantharaja the best way. He has explained this yoga in other chapters also. This view may not have been acceptable to Shri Shankara. Further, Shri Jnaneshwar says that the performance of one's duty is tantamount to nitya yajna and if it 1s performed in a selfless spirit and with dedication to God, 1t leads to liberation independently. Further he says that in order to reach the lofty peak of liberation, devotion is an easy foot-path and that it is attained step by step (kramayoga) by performing one's duty, devotion to God. attainment of knowledge and non-dual devotion. In this way, the devotee becomes jnani-bhakta, who is most dear to God and becomes one with him. On the other hand, the other commentators of God hold that liberation is achieved through devotion to a personal God and even after

attainment of liberation the devotee retains his individuality and lives in the presence of God. It is thus obvious that Shri Jnaneshwar consulted the Shankarabhashya and not the other commentators. But he did not follow it blindly, but formed his own views about the message of the Gita.

Natha Cult

Shri Jnaneshwar has mentioned briefly his cult (Sampradaya) at the end of Jnaneshwari (18.1750-61): In very ancient times, Shri Shankara, the slayer of demon Tripura, whispered in the ears of goddess Parvati the secret knowledge on the shore of the Milky Sea. Vishnu who was in the stomach of a fish heard it and attained knowledge and as Matsyendranath he imparted it to Goraksanath, who in turn bestowed it upon Gahininath and that knowledge came down from Gahininath to Nivrittinath and from Nivrittinath to me, fulfilling our desires". When this Natha cult arose, there were many Tantra cults such as Shakta, Kapalika. Bauddha Tantra. etc. All these cults arose out of the Shaiva scriptures (agamas) and claimed their origin from Lord Shiva, the Primal Guru (Adinatha). Massyendra-natha was the first human Guru of the Natha tradition and was a prophet of the Kaula sect. It is not possible to explain fully the nature of the philosophy of the Shaiva scriptures, what changes were wrought in it by the Kaula sect, and how the Natha Sampradaya originated from the latter. But we must take into account the permanent impressions, which the Natha sect left on the mind of Shri Jnaneshwar.

Shaivagama holds that the ultimate truth is Adinath Shiva. He is self-illuminated, known to himself only, infinite and imperishable and has Shakti as his mate. Like Sankhya's prakriti, this Shakti is the cause of the origination, continuance and dissolution of the world. She is ever active and she becomes manifest or remains in an unmanifest form. But unlike Sankhya's prakriti, she is not independent of God and is not unconscious, but has a conscious form. Prima facie, therefore, this Shaiva doctrine appears to be based on dualism. There is a mention in the Shantiparva of Mahabharata {337.59) that Sankhya, Yoga, Pancaratra, Veda and Pashupat hold differing view. While commenting upon the Brahma-sutra (II.2.37) Shri Shankara states that according to the Maheshwaras Pashupati Shiva is the instrumental cause of the world. If this is correct, we have to admit that the Shaiva doctrine is based on dualism. According to the Akulavira-Tantra, there are two classes of Kaulas, the Kritaka and Sahajas. Of these the Kritakas were duellists, while the Sahajas accepted the unity of God and the devotee. One may safely infer from this that the Shaivaites were originally duellists, but some of them were converted to monism after adopting the Kaula creed. In the Shaiva worship, the important elements are initiation through a mantra, worship of Shiva and Shakti and devotion to the preceptor. It ' 1s not possible to say what was the original form of this worship. Perhaps 1t consisted of the worship of

Shiva in the form of the phallus (linga) and the worship of Shakti in the form of a mystical diagram on a copper plate (yantra). We do not have definite information whether this worship included the practice of yoga; but since the Hathayogapradipika of Svatmarama mentions both Matsyendranath and Gorakshanatha. 1t is possible that Matsyndranath included it in the Kaula sect. But it 1s certain that devotion to Lord Shiva and to the Guru formed two important elements in the Shaiva sects. In the Vedas and Brahmanas first Indra and then Vishnu held the preeminent position among the gods and the Lord Shiva came to be identified with Brahman only in the Shvetashvatara, which is a later Upanishad. They also insisted upon reverence and obedience to the Guru, but 1t is doubtful whether they included in this devotion the worship of the sandals of the Guru and rendering service to him as described by Shri Jnaneshwar 1n the thirteenth chapter of the Jnaneshwari (ovis 341-344).

As mentioned in the Mahabharata, Shaivagama and the Vedas held different doctrines. But later there was an attempt to bring about a reconciliation between the two. In the Shvetashvataropanishad it is stated that Shiva is the same as Brahman and Maya is his divine power devatmashakti. On the other hand Lord Shiva says in the Kularnavatantra (2.10) that he has churned the sea of the Agamas and the Vedas and brought out the Kuladharma. He further says that Shiva is essentially the Supreme Brahman (1.7) without qualities. the Existence-Consciousness-Bliss and the individual Selves are his parts like sparks of fire (1.8,9). It is further stated in the same Tantra (1.108) that Lord Shiva has proclaimed monism (advaita) and so the Kaulajnananirnaya holds that Shiva is non-different from his Shakti.

There is no Shiva without Shakti,
no Shakti without Shiva (1 7.8- 9).

As Shakti creates the whole world she is known as Kula; Shiva who is inactive and without family or lineage is akula. As Bhaskara, who is an adept in this Tantra, says, Shiva-Shakti-Samarasyam Kaulam 1.e, Kaula - is oneness between these two. So this Kaula Shastra is based on non-dualism and knowledge is said

[7. Sir John Woodroffe and M.P. Pandit, Kulamavatantra, Madras, 1965.]
[8. P.C. Bagchi, ed. KaulaJnananimaya. Calcutta, 1934.]

to be impossible for the ritualists who perform sacrifices or the ascetics who mortify their bodies to attain liberation. Further after declaring non-dualism, it states that liberation 1s attained only through knowledge, and this knowledge is acquired from the mouth of the Guru (1.108). It w111 thus be seen that there is great similarity now between Kaula and Vedanta.

Kaula and Yoga

In the Kaula sect there was greater emphasis on physical and mental discipline rather than on outward ritual practices. Their discipline included yoga and meditation. This subject is dealt with in the fourteenth Chapter of Kaulajnananirnaya. However, the exact method of yoga 1s not indicated; but still the experiences and the yogic powers (siddhis) acquired through the yoga are clearly mentioned. For instance, the yogi experiences tremours in his hands, feet and head and hears different sounds 1n the course of his yogic practice. He acquires such powers as rising above the ground, mastery in poetry, the knowledge of past and future, cheating of time, the power to assume different forms, absence of wrinkles and grey hair and power to roam 1n the sky. The Yoginitantra of Matsyendranath mentions many subtle powers, the power to see a distant thing and entry into another's body. But the ultimate aim of yoga was to attain the state of mindlessness (unmani avastha). The Kaulajnananiryana further states that the mind enters the Khechari centre (brahmarandra) and drinks nectar (verse 93). Moreover Svatmarama in his Hathayoga makes a prominent mention of Matsyendranath and Gorakshanatha as proficient in Hathayoga from which 1t appears that the Kundaliniyoga was already incorporated 1n the Kaula path. But it also included devotion, which it has inherited from Shaivogama. It is stated in the third chapter that one should discard images made of stone, wood or clay and mentally worship the shivalinga with flowers in the form of non-injury, sense-restraint, compassion, devotional love. forgiveness, absence of anger, mediation and knowledge. It is, therefore, incorrect to hold that Shri Jnaneshwar introduced devotion for the first time in Natha Sampradaya.

Kaula and the Five Ms

The Kularnavatantra mentions the Kaula sadhana thus: bhogayogatmakam kaulam (2.23). If one desists from sensual enjoyments, it causes disturbance of the mind. which results in the interruption of spiritual practice. The enjoyment of sensual pleasures with restraint does not disrupt the spiritual practices and facilitates yoga. bhogo yogayate sakshat (2.24). The KaulaJnananimaya discusses the so-called five Ms (madya, maccha, mamsa, mudra and maithuna) namely wine, fish, meat. mudra and sex, which formed an essential part of Kaula practice. But it is stipulated that one should make an offering of the meat and wine to Shakti before partaking of it. The sex is to be enjoyed with restraint for procreation after remembering Shakti. The Kaulas, therefore, believe that the enjoyment of these Ave Ms after making them pure and consecrated becomes an aid to yoga. But it was found that it is difficult to practise such restraint. Matsyendranath himself had become enamoured of a yogini and was living with her and there is a legend that he had to be rescued by Gorakshanath. The Kaula sect adopted by Matsyendranath was known as

Yogini-Kaulamata. As this sect was dominated by the Yoginis, there were sexual excesses of which two incidents are mentioned in Leelacharitra of Chakradhara according to one. Kahnapada, a disciple of Jalandhara died after sexual intercourse with a yogini named Bahudi, in which he tried to demonstrate his full control over seminal discharge (urdhvaretavastha). In the other, a yogini by name Kamakhya is reported to have gone to Changdeva Raul after hearing his fame and demanded intercourse with him. As a result of her insistent demand, Changdeva was forced to commit suicide. Because of such excesses, Gorakshanath laid great emphasis on the observance of dispassion.

Gorakshanath and Natha Sampradaya

It thus appears that the Natha Sampradaya had inherited its philosophical tenets from the Kaula sect. Matsyendranath seems to have played a major role in the formulation of the Kaula doctrines. So his mention by Shri Jnaneshwar as the first human preceptor of Natha Sampradaya is proper. Gorakshanath. his disciple, has included in the spiritual discipline to be followed by a yogi the following items: purity of the body and the mind, distaste 'for all ostentatious rituals. dedication to knowledge along with disgust for the consumption of meat and wine and dispassion. Out of these the first four items formed part of the Kaula path, but Gorakshnath discarded the last two items and placed great emphasis on yoga and dispassion. It is for this reason that Shri Jnaneshwar has called him the lake of lotus-creeper in the form of yoga and the conquering hero of sense-objects. (Chapter XVIII 1755) Gorakshanath was a great organizer and

[9. R, C. Dhere: Shri Guru Gorakshanath, Nath Sampradayacha Itihasa. (in Marathi) Bombay, 1959. p. 27.]

propagandist who spread the Natha Sarnpradaya all over India. He had Hindus as well as Muslims among his devotees. He had especial sympathy for the downtrodden and showed them the path of self-development. His work in this regard deserves special mention.

Jnaneshwar and the Gita

How did Jnaneshwar who had taken initiation in the Nath cult turn to the Gita? No definite view can be given on this. Shri Tagare says as follows: 'It is stated in the Mahabharata that Shri Krishna, who wished to propitiate Lord Shiva for a boon of a son to his wife Jambavati, had gone to Upamanyu and had learnt from him the Shaivite way of worship (Anushasanaparva, 14, 18). Thus Shri Krishna was a disciple of Upamanyu, intuited in the Pashupata sect, and this gave rise to the faith that the Bhagavadgita was a Shaiva text. Shaivites Vasugupta and

Abhinavagupta had written commentaries on the Gita. But this legend has been added later on, and it is obvious that the theme of the Gita is upanishadic knowledge. Although the Bhagavadgita has brought about a synthesis of Vedanta with Sankhya, Yoga and Pancaratra, I did not find any such synthesis with Pashupat. Shri Jnaneshwar says in the tenth chapter (Ovi 19) that his Guru commanded him to explain the knowledge of Brahman in the form of the Gita in the Ovi form. He further adds that he wrote his commentary in order to destroy the poverty of thought and reveal the knowledge of Brahman. The Kaula worshipper gave equal respect to. Lord

[10. O. V. Tagare, Shiva Darshan, (in Marathi) Pune, 1987, p. 8.]
[11. M. R. Yaardi, The Gita as a Synthesis, Pune, 1991, pp. 63-74.]

Vishnu as to Lord Shiva and both Gahininath and Nivrittinatha were devotees of Lord Krishna. In the Kularnavatantra it is laid down that on the janmashtami (the birthday of Lord Krishna) Kaulas should offer special worship to Lord Krishna (10.7). Perhaps the Shaivites were attracted to the Gita, as,: it dealt with devotion. Thus in turning to Gita Shri Jnaneshwar was following this tradition. Even after he imbibed the brahmavidya of the Gita, he carried over his interest in Kundaliniyoga and devotion to Guru, which find an abundant mention in the Jnaneshwari.

Jnaneshwari and Kundaliniyoga

The Natha Sampradaya holds that this non-dual Shiva principle has permeated the world and so whatever there is in the universe (brahmanda) is also in the body (pinda). The Shakti lies dormant in the form of Kundalini in the Muladhara centre in the human body and Shiva abides in the Sahasrara centre in the head. With the aid of the purification of the nadis, postures. bandhas and breathing exercises the Sushumna passage opens out and the Kundalini wakes up and rushes up to meet Shiva in the Brahmarandhra. When she embraces Shiva in the sahasrara centre, the yogi attains the state of emancipation. When this kundalini wakes up and goes up the sushumna nadi after piercing the centres, then the lake of moon's nectar becomes tilted and the nectar falls into the mouth of Kundalini. Shri Jnaneshwar has. given a very fascinating account of the changes which take place in the body of the yogi. In this way Shri Jnaneshwar has described with the intensity of his experience the knowledge of the traditional yogic process which he had received in the Natha Sampradaya. In the chapter VI. he has said very clearly that this is a secret of the Natha sect. He was, therefore, fully aware that this yoga was not taught in the Gita; for he states (ovis 291. 292) that Shri Krishna ' had made a casual reference to this secret of the Natha sect and that he has elaborated this before the audience. From this it is evident that Shri Jnaneshwar has not only written a commentary on the Gita but has also

incorporated his own experiences in it. By including the Kundaliniyoga in the Jnaneshwari and extolling it as the great path (pantharaja), he has accorded to it the same status as that of the dhyanayoga in the Gita.

Devotion to Guru

In Kaulamata and Natha Sampradaya, devotion to Guru has special importance. The Kularnavatantra has devoted one full chapter as to how a disciple should worship his Guru. It is stated there that the sacred sandals (paduka) of the Guru form his ornaments; the remembrance of his name is his japa; to carry out his commands is his duty; and service to the Guru is his worship. The Gita mentions service to the Guru as one of the characteristics of a jnani by one word, acharyopasana, but Shri Jnaneshwar has explained it in as many as ninety ovis. Practically at the beginning of every chapter he has made obeisance to the Guru and has sung his praise. In the Natha Sampradaya special stress has been laid on initiation (diksha) and on transference of power (shaktipata) by the Guru to the disciple. It is said that no mantra becomes fruitful, unless the disciple hears it from the mouth of the Guru. Transference of power is specially important 1n the awakening of the Kundalini. The Kundalini becomes awakened very quickly by the touch of the Guru. This transference of power 1s mentioned in the Jnaneshwari. In the eighteenth chapter Shrl Jnaneshwar states, "I was experiencing the dream in the form of the universe in sleep in the form of ignorance. But the Guru patted my head and awakened me" (Ovi 403). He adds further, "In order to grant what the Lord could not give through words, the Lord hugged Arjuna, and then

'the two hearts mingled and what has in
the heart of the Guru was transferred to the
heart of the disciple'.

and so the Lord made Arjuna like himself without obliterating the duality between. the guru and the disciple.

This is not a mere imagination of a poet. In the life of Shri Ramakrishna (pp. 376-377), we And a description of the state of Narendra Oater Swami Vivekananda) when Shri Ramakrishna touched him with his foot. Narendra said: "Anyway, enquiring of many people, I reached Dakshineswar at last and went direct to the Master's room. I saw him sitting alone. merged in himself, on the small bedstead placed near the bigger one. There was no one with him. No sooner had he seen me than he called me joyfully to him and made me sit on one end of the bedstead. I sat down and found him in a strange mood. He spoke indistinctly something to himself, looked steadfastly at me and was slowly coming towards me. I thought another scene of lunacy was going to be enacted. Scarcely had I thought so when he came to me and placed his right foot

on my body, and immediately I had a wonderful experience. I saw with my eyes open that all the things of the room together with the walls were rapidly whirling and receding into an unknown region and my I-ness together with the whole universe was, as it were, going to vanish in the all-devouring great Void. I was then overwhelmed with a terrible fear; I had known that the destruction of I-ness was death and that death was before me, very near at hand. Unable to control myself, I cried out loudly and said, ' Ah! What is it you have done to me? I have my parents, you know.' Giving out a hoarse laugh to hear those words of mine and touching my breast with his hand, he said, 'Let it then cease now; it need not be done all at once; it will come to pass in due course.' I was amazed to see that extraordinary experience of mine vanish as quickly as it had come when he touched me in that manner and said those words. I came to the normal state and saw things inside and outside the room standing still as before."[12]

Yoga and Knowledge

Then Shri Jnaneshwar must have soon realised like Shankaracharya that the yoga does not become complete without knowledge. While commenting on the Brahmasutra II. 1.3, Shankarcharya states that one does not enjoy the bliss of Brahman through Sankhya knowledge and the practice of yoga. In the Amritanubhava (727) Shri Jnaneshwar calls the yogi 'the moon in the day-time' i.e. the yogi becomes as lustreless as the moon before the sun of knowledge. One recollects here the legend of yogi Changdeva. Changdeva was a great yogi, who had taken initiation from yogini Muktabai, disciple of

[12. Swami Saradananda, Shri Ramakrishna Math, Madras,1952, p. 733.]

Gorakshanath. He had practiced yoga over many years and had attained many miraculous powers, which had enhanced his ego. " When Shri Jnaneshwar received a blank letter from him, his sister Muktabai aptly remarked that Changdeva had remained blank in respect of knowledge. It was, therefore, natural that Changdeva should shed his pride before the Lord of knowledge. But this is the upanishadic knowledge, not the knowledge acceptable to the Shaivites. Shri Jnaneshwar has disclosed only the knowledge of the Self in his three books, Jnaneshwari, Amritanubhava and Changadevapasashti.

The Prince among Jnanis

Shri Jnaneshwar had undoubtedly become sthitaprajna and jnani after practicing the path of knowledge. The Gita states that tranquillity abides 1n a sthitaprajna (chap- 2.70). Even if all the currents of the rivers become swollen and join the sea, the latter does not become disturbed and

remains serene. Shri Jnaneshwar had attained such serenity to the fullest extent. Although the Brahmins persecuted the three brothers and sister as being offsprings of a monk, he has praised them as gods on earth, the fountainhead of all sacred lores and austerities incarnate. Among the characteristics of a man of wisdom in the thirteenth chapter, the first and the chief is amanitva, non-arrogance. Humility Shri Jnaneshwar says. 1f a person casts off all vanity of being great, forgets his learning and becomes humble, then know that he has attained knowledge of Brahman. Shri Jnaneshwar was fully conscious that he had written an excellent commentary on the Gita; but 1n all humility he gives all credit to his guru Nivrittinatha. All the

[13 S. V. Dandekar. op. cit. p. 122.]

characteristics of a jnani mentioned in the Gita apply to him thoroughly. He who has attained knowledge does not see any distinction in all beings. As he has discarded egoism, he does not discriminate between a mosquito, an elephant, a cow and a dog (Gita V.18). But compared to an elephant, a cow or a dog, a he-buffalo is a brainless creature. But when Shri Jnaneshwar, along with his brothers and sister, had gone to Paithan to obtain a certificate of expiation, somebody had asked him mischievously whether the he-buffalo that was passing by the road had a soul, he had without a moment's thought asserted that the soul which abides in a human being is also in the he-buffalo. This seems to have given rise to the legend that he had made the he-buffalo chant the Vedic hymns. Shri Tukaram has, therefore, appropriately praised Jnaneshwar as the prince among jnanis.

Devotional Love

The devotion in the Gita is mostly based on meditation, but there is a reference to devotional love in it. The Lord states in the tenth chapter that he gives buddhiyoga to those who worship him with love (verse 10). Further in .the eleventh and the twelfth chapters, the Lord tells Arjuna to work for him (matkarmakrit, verse 55) or be devoted to work for him (matkarmaparama, verse 10). Shri Shankara interprets this as 'one should perform his works with dedication to God'. But Abhinavagupta takes matkarma as Bhagawata Dharma, consisting of worship, austerities, scriptural study, sacrificial rites etc. Madhusudana goes a step further and identifies matkarma as Bhagavata Dharma of ninefold devotion consisting of hearing, singing praise etc. But the word Bhagavata does not occur in the Critical Edition of Mahabharata. So the Bhagavata Dharma seems to have germinated from these sayings 1n the Gita and spread in North India before the second Century B.C. Shri Jnaneshwar, however, knew the Bhagavata Purana, to which, he refers in Chapter XVIII (Ovi 1132). According to some scholars he has taken more than half his illustrations

from the Bhagavata. Many of the references to Pauranic stories in the Jnaneshwari belong to the Bhagavata Purana. Shri Jnaneshwar mentions nine-fold devotion in adhyaya VI (oui 127), where he says that Arjuna was the chief deity of the eighth kind of devotion named friendship.

Shri Jnaneshwar has given a marvellous description of the kirtana bhakti in the ninth chapter (Ovi 97-112). Such devotees, he says, sing songs of God's praise and dance with the joy of devotion. They have made all talk of atonement redundant, as there is not a trace of sin left in them. They take my name as Krishna, Vishnu, Hari, Govinda and spend their time in discussion over the nature of Self. By loudly singing the name of god, they have given a healing touch to the miseries of the world and filled it with the bliss of Self. Hardly, if ever, a soul reaches Vaikunth (the abode of Vishnu), but these devotees have turned this world itself into Vaikunth. The Lord says that he may not be found in Vaikunth or the region of the sun and he may even pass by the minds of yogis, but he is sure to be found where his devotees sing his praise aloud. To utter the name of God even once by mouth is the reward earned by rendering service to him in thousands of years; yet the same name ever dances on their tongue. One cannot compare them with the sun, the moon or the cloud, as the sun sets, the moon is full only at times and the cloud becomes empty after a while. But the knowledge of these devotees never sets, they are always full of devotion, and they flood this world with the knowledge of the Self.

Jnanadeva and – Namdeva

This will show that Shri Jnaneshwar was not unacquainted with devotional love. But he must have come to know its tender intensity only after he met Shri Namdeva. It is not known how and where they first met. Both of them were great in their own way. Shri Namdeva must have become dazzled by the knowledge and devotion of Shri Jnaneshwar based on non-dualism. while the latter must have been greatly impressed by the intense devotional love and the depth of feeling of Shri Namdeva for Vitthala. In chapter X, Shri Jnaneshwar has given a beautiful description of what two devotees do when they meet. They must have conversed with each other and danced with joy in the fullness of knowledge and devotion. They must have exchanged their experiences and shared their knowledge and devotion with each other. Just as when the water in two lakes shoots up. the waves of one mingle with the waves of the other, so the ripples of their mirth must have mingled together. They must have spent days and nights in singing the praise of God and in discussions on the Self. Their meeting bore two results. Namdeva realised that devotion remains incomplete without Self-knowledge and went to Visoba Khechar to take initiation. Shri Jnaneshwar on his part became a devotee of Vitthal and turned to devotional love (madhurabhakti).

Non-dual Devotion

The usual nature of devotion is such that the devotee ascribes the human attributes to God and worships God with form. Or else he attributes divine qualities to an extraordinary and remarkable person ' and worships him as an incarnation of God. The Gita says that some devotees worship God to obtain relief from misery or with the desire of wealth or with the desire of knowledge. But the devotee of the fourth kind worships God without entertaining any desire in his mind. It is generally believed that devotion is not possible unless there is duality between God and the devotee. The devotion in the school of Shri Madhwa is openly of dual form. But even though the schools of Shri Ramanuja or Shri Vallabha are non-dualistic in a sense, their devotion too is based on a distinction between God and the devotee, as they believe that a liberated soul does not become one with God, but retains his individuality and enjoys independent life in the proximity of God. But Shri Jnaneshwar regards such devotion based on distinction between God and the devotee as unchaste and parochial. He says in the fourteenth chapter that it is not that one should attain God-realisation after the dissolution of the world but that one should try to apprehend God along with the world. If God is worshipped with the knowledge that he has pervaded this whole universe, it becomes chaste, non-dual devotion (Ovis 379, 80). Even if there are waves in the sea, they are all water. So the jnani-bhakta sees God in the universe and worships him with the intensity of devotion, He says, whatever creature one meets, one should regard it as God; such is the nature of non-dual devotion. At the end of the twelfth chapter the Gita mentions the characteristics of a jnani-bhakta, starting with 'without hatred towards any being.' This characteristic exactly describes him. He did not even hate the wicked persons.

He has prayed to God in his last prayer (pasayadana) not to destroy them but to destroy their wickedness. Another characteristic of a jnanibhakta is that he is not troubled by the world nor does he trouble the world. In the thirteenth chapter, while commenting on non-violence, he has stated that a jnani takes great care that he does not trample any creature and cause harm to it as God is immanent in it. It can be shown that he possessed all the characteristics of a jnani-bhakta.

One may ask, how can one who had became one with God through devotion based on non-dualism turn to devotion of God with form? Shri Jnaneshwar has given a reply to this question in chapter XII. The Lord says, "even though a person, has become a yogi by practicing the means of Karmayoga externally and of dhyanayoga internally, he attains intense love for my form with attributes. O Arjuna, he alone is a devotee, a yogi and a liberated soul. I am so fond of him as though he is my beloved and I the husband. He is dearer to me than My own Self. This simile too is

inadequate to express the relation between us. The account of my true devotee is a magical formula (mantra) which infatuates the mind. One should not say such things, but I had to say them because of my love for you. When the subject of my devotee is broached, my affection for him doubly increases (Ovis 155-60). Just as the devotee feels an attraction for Me, I too have a 'passion' for him" (Ch. XVIII, Ovi 1349)". What the nature of this love is, is seen in the Varuna hymn of sage Vasistha in Rgveda (VIII.86). Dr. R.N. Dandekar says that the devotee feels 'an irresistible urge to establish a personal communion with God' and 'an acute sense of alienation when he thinks that for some reason God has deserted him'.[14] The devotee sometimes thinks that god has forsaken him and feels an acute agony of separation. This is known in western books of devotion as the 'night of darkness'. Shri Jnaneshwar has described the pangs of separation in his Abhangas on Gaulani (cowherdesses) and Virahini (a wife suffering the pangs of separation from her husband). If the erotic language of these songs shocks us it is entirely our fault, not of Shri Jnaneshwar. The devotional love (prema-bhakti) of Shri Jnaneshwar is flawless. The excesses which took place in the Pushtimarga of Shri Vallabha or the Chaitanya sarnpradaya did not take place in Maharashtra. This is because Shri Jnaneshwar laid the foundation of the Bhagavata Dharma on the secure basis of knowledge {Janna) and dispassion *(vairagya)*.

Shri Ramanuja holds that no one can attain liberation without prapatti or complete self-surrender to god, without which one cannot gain the grace of God. It is not necessary for him to perform actions or yoga! Arbindo Ghosh also held the same view. Dr. Ranade has quoted a beautiful passage which succinctly explains his viewpoint 1n this regard.

"The Gita is not a book of ethics but of spiritual life. It teaches not human but divine action; not the disinterested performance of duties but the following of the divine Will; not a performance of social duties. but the abandonment of all standards of duty (sarvdharma), to take refuge in the Supreme alone; not social service but the action of the god-possessed, the Master-men and as a sacrifice to Him,. who stands

[14. R. N. Dandekar. Vedic Mythological Tracts. Dlhi 1979, pp.55, 341]

behind man and Nature (Essays on the Bhagavad-gita, p. 43)".[15]

I do not think this view would have been acceptable to Shri Jnaneshwar. On the contrary, he states in the eighteenth chapter that one should worship God through performance of one's duty. According to him one should place his actions like flowers at the feet of God. Later he says that his recital (kirtana) of Dharma has been a success. It must be remembered here that Shri Jnaneshwar take Dharma in the sense of duty

which has fallen to one's lot on account of ones qualities and actions. In his last prayer also he prays to God to let the sense of duty dawn upon the world.

Jnaneshwar and the Warkari Order

After Shri Jnaneshwar met Namadeva, he came to know the other great Warkari saints also. In the pilgrimage which he had undertaken with Shri Namadeva, Warkari saints such as Sena Nhavi, Savata Mali, Narahari Sonar, Gora Kumbhar, Chokha Mahar and Warkaris must have accompanied him. These Warkari saints performed their duties with dedication and worshipped Lord Vitthala with devotional love according to the Bhagavata Dharma. How they found spiritual meaning in their every-day life will be evident from the following passages.

As a barber, I shall give a dressing
(lit. haircut) to men. I shall explain the purpose
of life (clean the armpits) and pare the nails of desire and anger
-Sena Nhavi

Onions, radish and vegetables, these are my Vithabai (Vitthal)

-Savata Mali

O God, I am your goldsmith and carry on
the business of your name; I blow the
bellows of Jiva and Shiva and beat the gold
(taking the name of God) day and night.
-Narhari Sonar

[15. R. D. Ranade. The Bhagavadgita as a philosophy of God-relisatlon,]

All these saints were impressed by Shri Jnaneshwar and took refuge at his feet. Shri Jnaneshwar, who had taken initiation of the Natha sect is not known as a Siddhayogi, but he became the Mauli (mother) of the Warkaris and all devotees. Even after the lapse of seven centuries, devotees of Shri Jnaneshwar swarm to Alandi at the time of Ashadhi Ekadashi, when the palanquim containing the padukas of Shri Jnaneshwar is taken to Pandharpur, two hundred seventy kms. from Alandi; warkaris and devotees in thousands tread this distance in rain and sun, singing the Haripatha. On the occasion of the Kartiki Ekadashi a fair is held at Alandi where his devotees flock in lakhs. I bow to that Jnaneshwar Mauli a

hundred times and offer this flower-petal in the form of this work at his feet.

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Pune, 3rd March 1991
M. R. Yardi

Preface to the Second Edition.

This second edition has been brought out at the pressing demand of devotees of Jnaneshvara. I thank Shri Y. A. Dhaigude for helping me in proof-reading and Shri Rajendra Palkar for preparing the picture of Shri Jnaneshwar on the frontispiece. I am grateful to Shri Vitthal Likhite of the Maharashtra Mudranshala Printing Press for a neat print of this book. It gives me great satisfaction that this second edition is being published in the seventh centenary year of the samadhi day of Shri Jnaneshwar.

Pune, 1995
M. R. Yardi

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author was born in a small village in 1916. He had his school education in the Hindu High school. Karwar and Garud High School, Dhulia and college education in the Ferguson college and Shri Parshuram Bhau college, Pune. He had the good fortune to study Sanskrit under the guidance of Shri V. H. Nijsure and Prof. R. N. Dandekar and Mathematics under the guidance of Prof. D. D. Koshambi, and Prof. D. W. Kerkar. He stood first in Sanskrit in the matriculation examination (1933) and secured the Jagannath Shankarshet Scholarship. He stood first in the B. A. And M. A. Examination of the then Bombay University and was the chancellor's medallist (in Mathematics, 1939). He topped the list of successful candidates in the Indian Civil service held at Delhi in 1940.

He served the erstwhile Bombay and Maharashtra State as Collector of Pune, Development Commissioner, Bombay and as Finance Secretary in the state of Maharashtra. During his stay at Nasik, he had the privilege, along with his Friend Dr. C. B. Khadilkar, to read Shankara bhashya on the Brahma-sutra with his Holiness the late Dr. Kurtakoti, Shankaracharya of Karvira Peeth. He went to the Government of India in 1962 and worked as programme Advisor, Planning Commission, Additional Secretary, and Ministry of Home and retired as Finance Secretary in 1974.

After retirement he worked in all for ten years as a trustee and chief trustee of Shri Jnaneshwar Maharaja Sansthan at Alandi and has been working as Chairman, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Pune Kendra. His three works. The yoga of Patanjali, The Mahabharata, its Genesis and Growth, A Statistical Study and The Bhagavad-Gita as a Synthesis have been published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune. His translations of Jnaneshwari in Marathi, Hindi and English have been published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Pune Kendra.

Chapter First

DESPONDENCY OF ARJUNA

Om! I salute you, O Primal Lord, propounded by the Vedas; glory to you, who are known only to yourself, O supreme Self. O Lord, you are **Shri Ganesha**, Who illumines all things and minds. So I, disciple of Nivriti, say, please give me your attention. His (Shri Ganesha's) attractive form represents all the Vedas; his superb body exhibits their faultless diction. His limbs represent the Smritis, his gestures their styles; his handsome aspect represents their exquisite meaning. His jewelled ornaments represent the eighteen Puranas, the jewels set in gold being their doctrines set in poetry (1-5). His coloured robe constitutes their superb diction, its fine glossy thread standing for their poetical style. The jingling bells in the girdle round his waist represent the poetical and dramatic compositions. If you observe keenly, you will find in them all many doctrines set in poetry like gems in gold. The silken garment round the waist of Ganesha represents Vyasa's intelligence; and its shining borders denote the pure flashes of that intelligence.

His six hands suggest six philosophical systems, and the things held in them indicate their differing doctrines (6-10). The axe denotes the Nyaya logic, the goad the Vaisheshika creed; and the sweet juicy modaka (an Indian sweet) shows to advantage the Vedanta doctrine. The tooth in his hand, which is naturally broken. Indicates the refutation by the Vartikakra *(Kumarilabhatta)* of the Buddhist doctrine. It follows that his lotus-hand represents the Sankhya law of causation, while the safety-sign of the remaining hand establishes the pre-eminence of dharma. The straight trunk of Ganesha represents the pure thought conducive to the supreme joy of final beatitude. His straight white teeth denote the philosophical dialogues, while his half-open eyes represent the eye of wisdom. (11-15) His ears look to me as the Mimamsa and Vedanta schools; and the sages, like bees taste the ambrosial rut of knowledge from his temples. His temples, shining with the corals in the form of doctrines of the Dvaita and Advaita schools, are close on his elephant-head. And the sweet-smelling and beautiful flowers on his forehead denote the ten Upanishads full of wisdom. The first letter a represent his feet, the letter u his big tummy, and the letter m his circular head, the foremost among limbs all these three letters are untitled in the sacred syllable *Om*, which encompasses all spiritual knowledge. I salute Shri Ganesh, the primal seed of the world through the grace of my *Guru* Nivritti (16-20).

I know bow to the goddess of learning who, with her novel graceful speech and mastery of arts and skills, holds the world spellbound.

My worthy *Guru* seated in my heart has helped me to cross the flood of existence, and because of him I take special interest in discriminating knowledge. As the antimony applied to the eye extends a person's vision. And the hidden treasure revels itself to him wherever he casts his eye, or one who has the philosopher's stone in hand gains all desires, so by the grace of may *Guru* Nivritti all my desires are fulfilled. Therefore a wise person should serve his *Guru* and accomplish his object, even as by watering the trees ate the base its branches and leaves become fresh (21-25). or by a dip in the sea one acquires the merit of bathing all holy places, or by a sip of nectar one enjoys the taste of all juices. So again and again I salute my *Guru*, who has fulfilled all my desires.

Now listen to a profound tale *(Mahabharata)*, the source of all arts and entertainment's, the marvellous garden of trees in the form of discriminating thoughts-nay it is the source of joy, being the treasure-house of doctrines and the overfull ocean of nine ambrosial sentiments. Or one may say that it is the primal adobe become manifest, the origin of all lores and the dwelling-place of all sciences (26-30). It is the refuge of all the religions, the cynosure of holy men and the treasure-chest of the lovely gems of goddess of learning. It seems that in the form of various stories the goddess of speech became manifest to the worlds by revealing herself to the high-minded Vyasa. This tale is, therefore, the queen of poetry and the source of respect, which literary works command; and from this tale the sentiments *(rasas)* have received their poetical flavour. From this tale onwards-literary works became less arid and doubly sweet. Because of the literary art became more erudite, spiritual knowledge became more agreeable and the fortunate state of happiness became perfect (31-35). Because of it sweet things became sweeter, the erotic sentiment more elegant, and what is proper because popular and acceptable. Because of it literary art became skilled, and merit especially powerful, as a result of which Janamejaya easily got rid of his sin (of Brahmin-slaughter.)

A brief reflection will show that in this work excellence became especially elegant, and virtues have received the brilliance of righteousness. Just as the three worlds are lit up by the sun's light, so this world has become illumined by the intelligence of Vyasa. Even as seeds sown in a fertile field grow luxuriantly by themselves, so all subjects have attained excellence in the Bharata (36-40). Just as a person becomes cultured by staying in a city, so all subjects have become illuminated by the work of Vyasa. Just as in youth a tender bloom of beauty spreads over the body of a maiden, or with the advent of spring the gardens become flush with blossoms, or the ordinary gold bars look beautiful when turned into ornaments, so this tale

has become elegant in the flowery style of Vyasa, and probably because of this, historical works have resorted to it (41-45). In order to secure fame various Puranas, assuming a humble posture, have become incorporated in it in the form of anecdotes. Nothing exists in all the three worlds, which is not found in the Mahabharata; and so it is said that every tale in the three worlds is the. Leftover of Vyasa. This mellifluous tale, which is the source of the highest truth, was narrated by Vaishampayana to King Janamejaya. This tale is the best without an equal, holy and incomparable, the home of auspiciousness; now listen further.

Now like a pollen in a lotus, there is a discourse, which was given by Lord Krishna to Arjuna (46-50). or Vyasa's intelligence, after churning the sea of the Vedas. Verily obtained this incomparable butter. When he heated this butter on the Are of knowledge with discrimination, it became the sweet-smelling ghee. Men of dispassion seek it, the saints constantly enjoy it, and the adepts rejoice in it with the conviction 'I am Brahman'. It is heard eagerly by the devotees and is highly esteemed in the three worlds. It is told in the Bhishmaparva in the course of narration. It is called the Bhagavad-Gita, and Brahma and Ishvara sing its praise, and sages such as Sanaka practice it with reverence {51-55). Even as chicks of chakora' birds gently sip the nectar drops of moon-light, so should the audience enjoy this tale with a gentle mind. One should tell the *Gita* without words, enjoy it without the knowledge of senses, and grasp, its doctrine before it is spoken. Just as the bees pick the pollen without the lotus buds knowing it, that is the way to understand this text. Or just as without leaving its place, the blue lotus plant knows how to embrace the moon when it rises and enjoy its love (56-60), so only a person whose mind has become steady and profound can delve into the secret of this *Gita*. Therefore all of you saints who are fit to hear *Gita* in the company of Arjuna, may kindly give your attention to what I say.

O hearers, I have taken this liberty with some familiarity, as I know that you are broad-minded. The parents naturally like the lisping words of the child; and so need I, whom you have accepted and called your own. Beg you to forgive my many lapses (61-65)? But I have made a bloomer in that I have wished to grasp the meaning of the *Gita* and on the top of it entreated you to give your attention to me. Without realising that this task is beyond my capacity; I have made bold to undertake it. But what is a glow-worm before the sun'? I hear that a lapwing tried to empty the sea to save her chicks, so ignorant that I am, I have set out to do this difficult task. If a person wishes to clasp the sky. He has to be bigger than the sky; so all this seems like an impossible task to me. When Lord Shiva was expatiating on the greatness of the *Gita,* his spouse Bhavani questioned him in wonderment (66-70). Lord Shiva said, "O goddess, like your figure which no one can fathom, this doctrine of the *Gita* appears ever new when one thinks of it". While the ocean of the Vedas sprang from the snoring of

the Supreme Lord, He told this scripture that is *Gita* in person. This *Gita* is so profound that it confounded even the Vedas. How then can a dull-witted person like me attempt to explain it? How can one hold within one's grasp this boundless text or hold candle to its light? Or how can a midge hold the heavens within its fist?

But I am blessed with the support of one, and because of him I can speak with confidence. I, Jnanadeva, say that my *Guru* is favourably disposed to me (71-75). O saints, though I am ignorant and undiscriminating, the lamp of your kindness shines bright. Iron turns into gold with the touch of the philosopher's stone; and a dead person is revived by the power of nectar. When the Goddess of learning is pleased, she can bestow speech on the dumb. This is not a marvel, but the result of the inherent power in the object. How can anyone whose mother is the wish-yielding cow ever be in want? I have undertaken to compose this work with my Master's blessings. Please make good my shortcomings, if any and ignore my superfluities (76-80). I shall speak if you give me power to speak, even as the puppet can move only on the strength of the string. In a way I am favoured, instructed and decorated by holy men like you in a marvellous way. Then his *Guru* said, "Enough, you don't have to tell us all this. Be quick and give your thought to the work in hand." After hearing these words, Jnanadeva, disciple of Nivritti Joyfully said, "Now listen leisurely to what I say".

Dhritarashtra said:

1. *In the holy plain of Kurukshetra have gathered eager for battle, mine and Pandu's sons; what did they do, O Sanjaya?*
2. *Dhritarashtra, blinded by his filial affection, asked Sanjaya, "Tell me the news of Kurukshetra (81-85). To that Holy Land, Pandu's sons and mine have gone in order to wage a war; what they have been doing all this while, tell me all very quickly."*

Sanjaya said:
Seeing the army of the Pandavas arrayed in battle, King Duryodhana approached his teacher (Drona) and said these words:

3. *Behold this vast army of the Pandavas, O teacher, arrayed by the son of Drupada, (Dhrishtadyumna), thy clever pupil.*

At that time, Sanjaya said, the Pandava army had gone berserk as if the Death-god had opened his jaws at the time of dissolution. Now that the compact army of the Pandavas is surging forward like spurting poison, who can control it? Or like the submarine fire fanned by the squall of dissolution , drying up the seas and reaching up to the sky, so the irresistible Pandava army, organised into different arrays, looked dreadful.

(86-90) Duryodhana held the Pandava army in contempt in the same way as the lion thinks nothing much of a herd of elephants. He then approached Dronacharya and said to him, "Please see. how this army of the Pandavas is surging forward. Its different arrays look like walking forts and they have been organised by the clever son of Drupada (Dhrishtadyumna), who has been instructed by you in the art of war. Look how cleverly he has arrayed this vast army here (91-95).

4. *Here are valiant bownmen, peers of Bhima and Arjuna in battle, Yuyudhana (Satyaki), Virata and Drupada, a mighty warrior,*

   Besides there are here great warriors skilled in the art of weaponry and well- versed in the duties of a warrior. They are peers of Bhima and Arjuna in 'strength. daring and valour. I shall tell you their names on this occasion. Here is the great warrior Satyaki, Virata is here too, as also Drupada, the great car-warrior.

5. *Dhrishtaketu, Chekitana and the heroic king of Kashi, Purujit Kuntibhoja and Shaibya, foremost among men,*
6. *And Yudhamanyu the strong, Uttamauja the brave, Subhadra's boy and Draupadi's sons, great warriors all.*

   Look at Chekitana, Dhristaketu, the heroic Kashiraja, Uttamauja and Shaibya, the Lord of kings. Here is Kuntibhoja, Yudhamanyu, king Purujit and others, see them all (96-100). Here is Abhimanyu, who gladdens the heart of Subhadra, a second Arjuna; look at him, so said Duryodhana to Drona. Besides here are the sons of Draupadi, and other car-warriors, countless in number, have also gathered here.

7. *know further, 0 noblest of the twice-born, the captains of mg army the more distinguished among us; these I name to you for your information.*
8. *Your good self, Bhishma and Karna and Kripa, ever victorians in battle, Ashvatthama and Vikarna and also Bhurishrava, son of Somadatta.*

   Now I shall take this occasion to tell you the names of prominent warriors in our army. I shall briefly mention only a few of them those that are chief among us, including yourself. Here are Bhishma, son of Ganga, like unto the sun in lustre and valour, and Karna, who is to the enemies like a lion to the elephants (101-105). If either of them were to so resolve, he could destroy the world. And Kripacharya here alone is able to perform that task. Here is heroic Vikarna and over there is Ashvatthama, of whom even the god of death ever stands in awe. Here are son of Somadatta, Bhurishrava, ever victorious in war,

9. *And there are many other heroes, ever ready to risk their lives for mg sake, armed with many kinds of weapons, all of them skilled in warfare.*

and many other warriors whose valour even God Brahma cannot fathom; they are skilled in the science of arms and missiles, why say more! all missiles became current in the world from them only. They are full of valour and peerless in the world and they have espoused my cause with all their heart. Just as a faithful wife thinks only of her husband and none else, these warriors think of me to be their all. They are such great and good loyal sevants that they care less for their lives in the execution of their task. Skilful in warfare, they are renowned for their feats of war; why say all this? The warriors' code came into vogue from them only. So there are all-round warriors in our army too. How can one count them? They are innumerable.

10. *Unlimited is the army of ours, guarded by Bhishma; limited is this army of theirs, guarded by Bhima.*

    We have also entrusted the office of the General to Bhishma, foremost among veterans, world-conqueror and mighty warrior (111-115). Backed by his prowess, the army looks like a fortress, before which even the three worlds look small. As if the impervious sea has received the help of sub-marine fire, or the world destroying fire is aided by a hurricane, our army has as its General, Bhishma, the son of Ganga. Who then can resist it'? This Pandava army is too small in comparison with ours as stated before. Moreover this bumptious Bhima has become their general. After saying this, he stopped talking (116-120).

11. *Taking up your respective positions on all fronts, all of you support Bhishma alone from all sides.*

    Then he addressed his officers thus: "Keep the army under you in a state of readiness. Those who are . the captains of the army units should remain in the front and distribute the tasks among the car-warriors. They should keep their units under control and remain near Bhishma." Then he said to Drona, "You should oversee all this. You should support Bhishma alone and hold him in my place. For. now our army entirely depends upon him."

12. *In order to cheer him up, the aged Kuru Lord his valiant grandsire, roared aloud like a lion and blew the conch.*

    Hearing this address of the King, the General was overjoyed, and he gave out the lion's roar (121-105). This war-cry resounded in both armies with such force that the echo which arose could not be contained. His heroic nature being excited by that echo, Bhishma blew his divine conch. The two sounds mingled deafening the three worlds, and it seemed as if the sky would come down with a crash. The heavens thundered and the seas swelled upwards, and the moving and stationary things became stirred up

and shaken. The hills and caves resounded with that great noise, and war drums began to beat in both armies (126-130).

13. *Conches and kettledrums, drums, tabors and horns blared forth all of a sudden, and the noise became tumultuous.*

    The sound of all the musical instruments was so harsh and terrific, that it seemed like the end of the world even to the brave. Kettledrums, tabors, conches, cymbals and trumpets blared forth, followed by a terrible war-cry of the great warriors. Some patted their arms and challenged others with frenzy, and the rutting elephants could pot be controlled. What can one say about the cowards'? They were scattered like saw-dust. Even the god of death withdrew from the fray in panic. Some breathed their last. standing; others who were brave had locked - jaw; and even warriors of proved merit started shaking with fright (131-135). Hearing the strange blare of martial music even god Brahma became agitated; and the other gods thought that the end of the world had come now.

14. *Then standing in a mighty chariot with white horses yoked thereto, Krishna and Arjuna blew their conches divine.*
15. *Krishna blew the Panchajanya, Arjuna the Devadatta, and the wolf-bellied Bhima of terrible deeds blew his mighty conch Paundra.*
16. *Yudhishthira, son of Kunti, blew the conch Anantavijaya; Nakula and Sahadeva blew their . conches, Sughosha and Manipushpaka*.

    While the heaven was thus in turmoil. see what happened in the Pandava army. Arjuna arrived there in a chariot, which was the basis of victory and the seat of heroic lustre, and to which were yoked four horses as swift as the eagles. The chariot looked superb like the Meru mountain with wings, and because of it all the ten quarters were filled with brightness. How can one describe the merits of this chariot, of which the Lord of Vaikuntha (Vishnu) was the charioteer (136-140)? Hanuman, who was God Shankara incarnate, was seated on his flag-staff and Lord Krishna was driving his chariot. See how wondrous are the ways of the Lord; because of his love for his devotee, he worked as the charioteer of Partha. Keeping his page behind him, he took the frontal position and with great ease blew his conch Panchajanya. His blowing of the conch made a rumbling sound; and as the stars are bedimmed by the rising sun, in that sound was lost the din made by the martial music of Kaurava army (141-145).

    Then Arjuna blew his conch Devadatta, making a resounding sound. When these two sounds mingled, it seemed as.-. if the universe was being blown to smithereens. Then Bhima too got excited like the' god of death in fury and blew his great conch Paundra. When it emitted a deep roaring sound like a cloud at world-dissolution, Yadhishthira blew his conch Anantavijaya. Then Nakula blew his conch Sughosha and Sahadeva

Manipushpaka, as a result of which even the god of death became panic-stricken (146-150).

17. *And the king of Kashi, the great bomman and Sikhandi, the great warrior Dhrishtadgumna ' and Virata and unvanquished Satgaki,*
18. *And Drupada and Draupadi's sons from all sides, 0 king, and the mightg-armed son of Subhadra ble/ the conches separately.*
19. *That noise pierced the hearts of Dhritarashtra's sons, resounding tumultuously throughtout the heavens and earth.*

Many kings who had gathered there, Drupada. sons of Draupadi, the mighty-armed king of Kashi, Arjuna's son, invincible Satyaki, prince Dhrishtadyumna and Shikhandi, as also great kings like Virata and other chief captains blew their conches. Hearing that strident sound both Shesha and the tortoise thought of throwing off the burden of earth they carried. Then all the three worlds began to rock, Meru and Mandara mountains began to reel and the waters of the seas surged upwards to mount Kailasa (151-155). It seemed as if the earth would tumble down, the sky would shake and the stars would come down in a scatter. Then there was a clammer in Satyaloka that the earth was sinking and gods would be without support. The sun stood still in daytime, and as if the dissolution had come, there was weeping and wailing in all the three worlds. Astonished by this Lord Krishna feared that the world would come to an end and so he put a stop to that strange tumult.

By this the world was saved, else its end had arrived, when Krishna and others started blowing their big conches (156-160). Although the noise subsided, but its echo, which still lingered, routed the whole army of the Kauravas. As a lion tears a herd of elephants with ease, so the sound of the conches rent the hearts of the Kauravas. When they heard this sound, they readily lost courage and cautioned one another to remain alert and watchful.

20. *The ape-bannered Arjuna saw Dhritarashtra's sons in battle array, and when the flight of missiles was about to start, he lifted his bow*.

There the heroic car-warriors, full of valour, who were present, again brought their army units under control. Then they marched forward with such preparation and vehemence that the three worlds became panic-stricken (161-165). The archers there sent such a volley of arrows that they seemed like the uncontrollable clouds of deluge. Arjuna saw them with great satisfaction and cast his glance hurriedly at both the armies. When he saw the Kauravas ready for battle, he lifted his bow with great ease.

21. *And he uttered, O King, these words to Krishna, "Please place my chariot, O krishna, between two armies,*

    At that time Arjuna said, "O Lord, please take our chariot quickly and place it in the midst of the two armies,"

22. *Whilst I behold these men standing eager for battle, and know with whom I have to fight in this business of war,*
23. *and whilst I survey those who have gathered here with intent to fight and mho are keen to* please in battle Dhritarashtra's perverse son *(Duryodhana).*

    So that I can see all the warriors who have come here to fight (166-170). For although all warriors have gathered here, I must know with whom I have to fight. These Kauravas are, generally speaking, wicked and itching for fight; they are without valour, but they have a burning desire to fight. They have a zest for fight, but they lack staying power". Saying this to the king. Sanjaya continued.

24. *Krishna, so addressed by Arjuna, O Bharata, placed the best of the chariots between the two armies,*
25. *In front of Bhishma, Drona and all kings and said, "0 Partha, behold these Kurus assembled here."*
26. *Arjuna saw there standing, uncles, grand-uncles, teacher s, maternal uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons and companions,*
27. *As also fathers-in-law and friends in both armies. When Arjuna saw all these kinsmen standing there,*

    Listen, O King. When Arjuna spoke thus, Lord Krishna placed the chariot between the two armies, where stood Bhishma, Drona, kinsmen and other kings (171-175). When the chariot came to a halt, Arjuna saw the Kaurava army and was greatly agitated. Then he said, "Lord! these are our teachers, relations and elders," which astounded Lord Krishna for a moment. Then he said to himself, "Does anyone know what Arjuna has in his mind'? but it is something strange." Being the inner controller of all beings, he certainly knew what was in his mind, but he kept quiet at that time.

    Arjuna saw there his uncles, grand-uncles, teachers and cousins (176-180). He saw gathered there his relations, friends, sons and others, his well-wishers, fathers-in-law, kinsmen and companions and grandsons. He saw there all those whom he had helped and protected in adverse times; in short, he saw all his kinsmen, old and young, come there to fight.

28. *And overcome with great compassion, he spoke thus in sorrow;*

At that time his mind was troubled and pity filled his heart. His heroic spirit, taking offence at this conduct, deserted him (181-185), even as a lady coming from a noble family and endowed with beauty and virtue does not tolerate a rival in her affection, or as a passionate person neglects his wife, being infatuated by another woman, and like one demented runs undeservedly after her, or as an ascetic, dazzled by the acquisition of miraculous powers, does not remember his dispassion. Such was the state of Arjuna, when he lost his manliness and yielded his heart to compassion. Look, even as the exorcist who makes a slip is overpowered by the ghost, that great archer was overcome by delusion (186-190). So he lost his natural courage and his heart bled with pity, even as the moon-stone melts at the touch of moon-light. In this way Arjuna became bewildered by his excessive affection and addressed Lord Krishna thus in great dejection.

29. *Seeing these kinsmen here, O krishna, bent on fighting, mg limbs become feeble, mg mouth goes dry; there is tremour in my body, and mg hair stands on end.*
30. *The Gandiva bow has slipped from my hand my skin burns all over; I am not able to stand firm, and my mind seems to reel.*

"Lord, when I look at this crowd, I see only my kinsmen there. True, they are all poised for battle; but will it be proper for us to fight with them'? The thought, bewilders me and has unhinged my mind (191-195). See, my body, is trembling, my mouth is parched, and langour has overtaken my limbs. The hair on my body bristles, my mind is agitated; and the Gandiva has slipped from my sluggish hand. I do not know when it dropped; my mind is so clouded by delusion". Sanjaya said that it is odd that pity should so unusually affect his heart, which is as hard as the adamant, harsh and truculent. He, who had conquered Lord Shiva and destroyed Nivatakavacha demons, was so overpowered by compassion in a moment (196-200). When the bee, which can bore into any dry wood, is caught in a flower bud, it would rather lose its life than tear it open; so the tender ties of kinship are Difficult to break. This is the Maya of the supreme God which even Brahma cannot cross. It confused the m1nd of Arjuna. so said Sanjaya to the king. After seeing his kinsmen there Arjuna lost all zest for war. One does not know how this pity entered h1s mind. Then he said to Krishna," Lord, let us not tarry here (201-205). When I see that I have to kill all these relatives, my mind becomes disturbed and I start raving.

31. *And I see omens that are adverse, O Krishna, nor do I foresee any good in killing our men in battle.*

If I have to slay the Kauravas, then why not Yudhishthira and others'? These Kauravas are also our kinsmen Therefore, 0 Lord, let this war go to blazes. I do not like it. What do we achieve by committing this grievous

sin'? I foresee that this war will end in disaster, but its prevention will tend to our benefit.

32. *I long not for victory, 0 Krishna, nor for kingdom nor for happiness. Of what use is a kingdom to us, or enjoyments or life itself?*
33. *They, for whose sake we desire a kingdom, jogs and happiness, are standing poised for battle and ready to lose their lives and wealth.*
34. *Yonder are our teachers, fathers, sons and grand-fathers, maternal, uncles, fathers-in-law, grandsons, brothers-in-law and other kinsmen.*

    I do not particularly fancy a victory of this kind. Of what use is a kingdom gained in this way (206-210)? If we have to kill all of them to enjoy pleasures, burn those pleasures, so said Partha. Rather than enjoy such pleasures, we shall gladly suffer misery of any kind and even risk our lives for them. To slay them and enjoy the pleasures of a kingdom, my mind cannot conceive of such a thing even in a dream. If we have to think of our. elders with animus, why should we come to birth, and for whom should we live'? When a family longs for a son, do they expect of him that he should utterly destroy his kith and kin (211-215)? How could we think of being as hard as adamant? Rather we should do whatever good we can offered for them. We should let them enjoy whatever we earn; in fact we should devote our entire lives in their cause. We should conquer all kings up to the limits of the quarters to please them. But it is the irony of fate that all our relations have come here to fight forsaking their wives, children and wealth, and committing their lives to the charge of missiles (216-220). How shall I kill them? How shall I wound my own Heart? Don't you know who they are? Yonder are Bhishma and Drona, who have placed us under many obligations. Here we have brothers-in-law, fathers-in-law, maternal uncles, cousins, sons and grandsons arid other relations. Listen, everyone of them is closely related to us; we shall be committing sin, even if we talk of killing them.

35. *These I do not wish to slag, even if they were to kill us. 0 Krishna, for the kingdom of the three worlds, let alone the earth.*

    Even if they were to cause harm to us or slay us, we would not think of attacking them (221-225). Even if we were to get the uncontested kingdom of the three worlds, I would not commit this foul act. If we commit this act today, how shall we retain the respect of others? Tell me, 0 Krishna, shall we be able to see your face thereafter?

36. *What fog shall be ours, 0 Krishna, by Killing the Kauravas? Sin alone will dog us, if we slag these aggressors.*

    If I were to slay these kinsmen, I shall be a hotbed of sins, and lose your company which we now have. If we cause the destruction of the family, we

shall incur many sins. When and where shall we see you then? If the garden is engulfed in a big Are, the cuckoo will abandon there even for a moment (226- 230). Or if the chakora bird sees that the lake is full of slime, it will abandon the lake and go away. Likewise, 0 Lord. if my merit becomes exhausted, you will beguile us and not greet us with affection.

37. *Therefore, we ought not to kill the Kauravas along with their kinsmen. Indeed, how can we be happy, O Krishna, by slaying our own people?*

    Therefore, I will not take up the weapon in this war. This deed appears to me improper in every way. If we lose you, 0, Krishna, what will remain with us'? Our hearts will burst with sorrow, if you will leave us. Arjuna said, "So this thing is 'not likely to come about that we should slay the Kauravas and enjoy ourselves" (231-235).

38. *Even if they do not perceive, with minds overcome by greed, evil in the destruction of the family or sin in the betrayal of friends,*
39. *Why should we not think it fit to turn away from this sin, when me see clearly, O Krishna, the wrong in the destruction of the family?*

    Even 1f the Kauravas. infatuated by pride, have come to fight us, we must see wherein lies our well-being. How can we slay our kith and kin? How can we drink poison knowing it to be so? If by chance, we come across a lion in our way, the advantage lies in avoiding it. If we throw away light and resort to a dark well, what benefit, O Lord, do we derive thereby? If we cannot keep away from fire facing us, it will engulf us and burn us in a moment (236-240). How do we conduct ourselves, when we know fully that the sin of kinslaughter will affect us? On that occasion Arjuna said, Lord listen to me. I shall explain how gruesome this sin is.

40. *With the ruin of the family, its ancient customs decline. When these customs perish, immorality overtakes the entire family.*

    Just as the fire, kindled by rubbing one stick with another, burns all wood, so. if men belonging to the same clan kill one another, then that

    horrible sin destroys the whole clan through malice. As a result of this sin family customs languish and thereby immorality finds a home in the clan (241-245).

41. *When immorality prevails, O Krishna, the women of the family become wanton; with the corruption of women, there arises intermingling of castes.*

    Then all thought of right and wrong, or moral conduct, of what one should do and should not do, is lost, even as a person who throws away the lamp in his hand and walks in the dark, trips on a straight road. So with the

destruction of the family its customs cease and then what can be his lot other than sin? When the senses start acting wilfully without self restraint, then even women of good families become unchaste. Then the higher castes unite with the lower castes, and with the mingling of castes the caste duties perish (246-250). Just as the crows pounce upon the food kept on the cross-road, so all sins rush at that family.

42. *And this mingling of castes leads the family and its destroyers to hell; for their forefathers fall from heaven, being deprived of their rice-balls and mater.*

    Then both the family and its wreckers go to hell. While the family grows it becomes degraded, and its forefathers fall from heaven. If no one performs the obligatory and periodical rites, who will offer water and seasamum seeds to the deceased? How can the ancestors then remain in heaven? They too come back to the family (251-256). Just as the poison of a snake-bite at the nail instantly goes to the head, so the sin of kin-slaughter envelops the whole family right from its founder.

43. *By the sins of those who destroy the family by the intermingling of castes, the long-standing caste duties and family customs get destroyed.*
44. *For men, O Krishna, whose family customs get destroyed their place is ever fixed in hell, so we have heard.*
45. *Alas! What a grievous sin we have resolved to commit, in that from the greed for the jogs of a kingdom me are ready to kill our kinsmen.*

    O Lord, listen; another grievous sin arises from this kin-slaughter. Contact with this family also vitiates public life. Just as a Are in an inner chamber of the house flares up and burns the other parts also, so everyone who comes in contact with this family, gets affected by it, and because of these sins he suffers a horrible life in hell (256-260). When a person goes to hell, he finds no respite even at the end of the world, so total is his downfall from the destruction of the family. 0 Lord, you have been hearing my chatter, but it does not seem to trouble you. Why have you made your heart as hard as an adamant? This body for which we expect royal pleasures is ephemeral. Knowing this, should we not avoid this sin of kin-slaughter? Have I not committed enough sin by looking at these elders with the intention of killing - them?

46. *Even if in this battle the Kauravas wielding weapons in their hands mere to kill me unresisting and unarmed, that would be far better for me.*

    Rather than live like this, it is better to lay down the weapons and suffer the attacks of the Kauravas (261-265). It would be far better to meet death in this way. I do not at all like the idea of committing the sin of kin-slaughter". When

Arjuna saw his kinsmen on the battle-field, he said that to enjoy a kingdom by killing them would be like hell.

47. *Thus spoke Arjuna on the battle-field and sat in the chariot seat, laying down his bow and arrows, his heart filled with sorrow.*

Sanjaya said to Dhritarashtra, "Listen, O King, Arjuna spoke thus on that occasion on the field of battle. He became very agitated and overcome by violent grief he jumped down from the chariot. Even as a deposed prince becomes the object of scorn, or the sun in eclipse (literally, swallowed by demon Rahu) becomes lack-lustre (266-270), or an ascetic tempted by miraculous powers goes astray and overcome by desire becomes wretched, so Arjuna seemed overwhelmed by excessive grief. after he dismounted from the chariot. Then, O King, he threw down his bow and arrows, and his eyes were filled with copious tears. After seeing Arjuna so overwhelmed with grief, the Lord of Vaikuntha will impart to him wisdom. It is a joy to listen to the story, which will come next in great detail, so said Jnanadeva, disciple of Nivritti (271-275).

Chapter Second

S anjaya said,

1. *To whom thus overwhelmed by pity, with troubled eyes, full of tears and despairing, Krishna spoke these words.*

   Then Sanjaya said listen, O king, Partha was there overcome with grief and was lamenting.. When he saw his family before, him, there arose in him a strange affection, and his heart melted with the warmth of feeling. Even as salt melts in water, or a cloud is dispersed by the wind, so his courageous heart was touched in a tender spot. He was overcome by compassion and looked wan like a swan stuck in a swamp. Seeing that Arjuna was afflicted by great delusion hear what Lord Krishna said to him (1-5).

   The blessed Lord said :

2. *When has come upon you at this critical juncture this infamous dejection, not followed by the noble nor leading to heaven?*

   O Arjuna, does this behaviour become you on this occasion? Think what you are and what you are up to? What's the matter with you? Do you lack anything? Has anything remained to be done? What grieves you? You never thought of improper things nor lost courage. Your very name scares away failure to the end of .the quarters. You are the abode of valour, the prince among warriors; all the three worlds stand in awe of your valour. You conquered Lord Shiva in war and dispatched the Nivatakavacha demons, and made the Gandharvas sing your praises (6-10). The world looks small in comparison with you so great are your qualities, O Partha. It is strange that losing your heroic spirit, you are lamenting with face downcast. Think for yourself, O Arjuna, how wretched you are with this compassion: Tell me, has darkness ever swallowed the sun? Does the wind ever fear the cloud or does nectar ever suffer death? Do you think that the firewood can smother the fire? Can the salt ever melt water? Can the deadly poison kalakoota die of poisoning? Tell me, can a frog swallow a cobra? (11-15). Has a fox ever wrestled with a lion? Have such queer things happened before? But you have made such things seem possible. Therefore, O Arjuna, do not think of such things. Take courage and come quickly to your senses. Give up this folly, arise and take the bow in hand. Of what avail is this compassion on the field of battle? O Arjuna, you are a clever fellow; why don't you think now? Tell me, is compassion proper at

the time of war? It will ruin your present reputation and spoil your chances of going to heaven, so said Lord Krishna to Arjuna (16-20).

3. *Yield not to impotence, 0 Partha; this does not become you. Cast off this gross weakness of the heart and stand up, 0 Arjuna.*

   Therefore, O Arjuna, rid yourself of this grief and take courage. Stop this unseemly wail of woe, O son of Pandu. The reputation you have built so far will cease; think now atleast what is good for you. This clemency will not help you on this occasion. Have -you realised only now that they are your kinsmen? Did you not recognise this before? Did you not know them to be your relations? Then why are you making now this fuss about nothing? Is such a war new to you in your life? There has always been between you sufficient motive for war (21-25). It is beyond my understanding, but 0 Arjuna, what you have done is wrong. If you stick to this delusion, you will lose your present reputation and forfeit the joys of heaven as also of this world. Faintheartedness is not good on such an occasion. It brings disgrace to a warrior in battle. The merciful Lord thus counselled Arjuna in many ways. Now listen to what Arjuna said after hearing it.

   Arjuna said :

4. *How shall I fight with arrows Bhishma and Drona in battle, when they deserve our homage, O slayer of foes?*

   Lord, there is no cause for you to say all this; pray, think for yourself about this wars (26-30). This is not a war but a blunder on our part. Our engagement in it will be disastrous, involving the slaughter of our elders. We should be serving our parents and giving them joy in every way. Instead, how can we slay them with our own hands?

   Lord, we should bow down to the holy men, and if possible, worship them. How then could we go on cavilling at them? These are our elders who deserve respect at all times. Moreover, we are indebted to Bhishma and Drona in many ways. When we cannot even dream of enmity with them, how can we think of attacking them face to face (31-35)? What's wrong with everybody? Re upon our life that we should use against them the military skills learnt from them! i is the pupil of Drona who taught me the science of archery. Shall I then return this favour by slaying him? Am I demon Bhasmasura that I should betray those who have granted us favours and blessings?

5. *It should be far better to live on alms in this world without slaying these high-souled elders. By killing these elders, even though money-loving, I should only be tasting joys smeared with their blood.*

We hear that the sea is calm, but it is only on the surface; but agitation does not affect the mind of Drona at any time. This limitless sky is capable of being measured some time; but Drona's heart is unfathomable deep (36-40). Nectar may turn sour or the diamond many break some time; but his mental balance will not shake even if provoked. They say that the mother has true love for her child; but the mind of Drona is kindness incarnate. Drona is the fount of compassion, the mine of all virtues, the limitless sea of learning, so said Arjuna. He is not only eminent, but he has also been kind to us: how then can we think of killing such a person? That we should kill our elders in battle and enjoy royal pleasures does not seem right to me, even if I have to part with my life (41-45). This is such a heinous crime; even if their death brings us greater joys, I would rather go without them and start begging. I would even lay down my life for their sake or resort to a mountain cave rather than take up arms against them. O Lord, how can we strike them in their vital parts with newly sharpened arrows and enjoy royal pleasures? What do we gain thereby? How can we enjoy these blood-stained pleasures? I therefore do not appreciate your reasoning. Please give thought to this, so said Arjuna to Krishna on that occasion. But Krishna did not at all like what he heard (46-50). When Arjuna divined this, he became afraid and said, "0 Lord why don't you listen to what I say"?

6. *Nor do I know which is better for us, that we conquer them or they conquer us. Those after killing whom we should not care to lieu, the Kauravas stand in array before us.*

   I have told you whatever is in my mind. But you know what is best for me to do in this matter. They, for whom we would fain lay down our lives, rather than be hostile to them, are standing here with the object of fighting us. I cannot make up my mind what is better for us, to slay them or withdraw from here.

7. *My nature is stricken with fault of pity, and my mind is confused about my duty, Pray tell me for certain what is better; I am your disciple, guide me who am your suppliant.*

   I do not know what is proper for me to do; I am so bewildered by reason of this declusion (51-55). When the sight is enveloped-by darkness, it cannot see even things close to it, such is my state. My perplexed mind cannot decide what is good for me. 0 Krishna, consider this and tell me what is proper in this case. You are our friend; you are all in all to us. You are our teacher, brother, father and also our favourite God. You have always been our protector in adversity. The teacher does not at all forsake his disciple, as the sea does not part from the river, which joins it (56-60). If a mother abandons her child, how will it survive? O Lord, you are our only friend, more so than to others, and if what I said does not appeal to you, then tell

me quickly, 0 Supreme Person, what is proper for me to do, which is not contrary to dharma.

8. *Indeed I see nothing that might dispel this sorrow that dries up my senses, even if I were to obtain the kingdom on earth, unrivalled and rich, or even the overlordship of gods.*

   The grief that I feel at the sight of these kinsmen will not be relieved without your instruction. Even if I were to gain the world or the abode of Indra, this delusive pity of mine will not abate (61-65). Just as a roasted seed, planted in a fertile soil, will not grow even when watered properly, or even as medicine is of no use to a person whose days are numbered, but nothing but nectar can help him, so neither royal pleasures nor prosperity can enliven my mind, but only, 0 merciful Lord, your affection will sustain me.

   (Jnanadeva says) so said Arjuna as if he was freed from delusion; but instantly he was seized by the sudden impulse of delusion. On second thought I feel that this was not a sudden impulse, but that he was bitten by the deadly snake in the form of delusion (66-70). When it saw that Arjuna's heart was overflowing with pity, it bit him in his vital parts causing repeated spasms of grief. In this difficult situation Lord Krishna, the snake-charmer, was there to counteract the poison with his compassionate gaze. As the Lord happened to be close by agitated Arjuna, he will easily protect him in his kindness. With this in view I had stated that Arjuna was bit by the snake 1n the form of delusion. Arjuna was enveloped by delusion as the sun is covered with clouds (71-75). Even as in summer the mountain is scorched by conflagration, so Arjuna, the supreme archer, had become torn with grief. Therefore, Lord Krishna, overflowing with the nectar of pity, turned towards him like a blue cloud, with his flashing teeth looking like lightening and his sonorous speech like rumbling thunder. Now hear how that generous cloud (Krishna) will pour and soothe the mountain (Arjuna) and produce shoots of wisdom in him. Listen to this story for the solace of' your mind, so says Jnanadeva, disciple of Nivritti (76-80).

   Sanjaya said:

9. *Having thus addressed Krishna, 0 scorcher of the foes, Arjuna said to Govinda (Krishna), "I shall nor fight" and became silent.*

   Sanjaya said, O king, listen to what the grief-stricken Partha said. He said to Lord Krishna, "Pray, do not press me further, I will not fight; about this my mind is settled". Saying this all at once, he remained silent. Lord Krishna was amazed to see him in that condition.

10. *Then smiling, as it mere, O Bharata, Krishna spoke to him, mho was grieving, these words in the midst of the two armies.*

    Then the Lord said to himself, "What is Arjuna upto now? He does not seem to understand. What can one do to make him see reason and restore his courage? Just as an exorcist appraises one possessed by a ghost (81-85), or a physician prescribes an antidote for an incurable disease, so Lord Krishna, standing in the midst of the two armies, began to think of a plan to rid Arjuna of his obsession. Divining its cause, he began to speak in a somewhat angry tone. Just as a mother's anger is full of affection for the child, or even a bitter medicine contains the ambrocial power of healing, which is not apparent but is seen from the result, so he began his speech with- apparent unconcern but full of affection within (86-90). The blessed Lord said:

11. *you grieve and yet spout words of wisdom. Neither for the dead nor for the living the wise men grieve.*

    Then he said to Arjuna: I am really surprised by what you propose to do in the midst of war. You call yourself clever, but you are not conscious of your ignorance. Well, if I wish to enlighten you, you raise various moral issues. When a person blind from birth becomes mad, he runs helter-skelter; your cleverness seems to me like that. You are ignorant of your Self and grieve for the Kauravas. This is what amazes me over and over again. Tell me, 0 Arjuna, do you support these three worlds? Do you think that this beginningless creation of the world is untrue (91-95)? When we talk of God as the originator of all creatures in the world, is it a mere empty talk? 4s it the case that you have created birth and death and the Kauravas will meet death only if you kill them? Or tell me, if you, deluded by egoism, refuse to slay them, will they live in eternity? Do not delude yourself that you are the one who kills, and they are the ones to get killed. All these things happen as ordained from time without beginning. Why should you then grieve over it without reason (96-100)? Not knowing this, you think the unthinkable out of folly and on the top of it profess to give us lessons in morality. The discriminating do not grieve over birth and death, as all our thinking about them is due to delusion.

12. *Never was there a time when I was not, nor you nor these kings; nor shall we ever cease to exist hereafter.*

    Now listen. as regards ourselves and all these kings and others who have gathered here, it is not true to say that they will live long or meet with sure death. If you get rid of your delusion, you will realise that it is not so. What we see as birth and death are due to illusion, Maya; otherwise the entity which really exists is indestructible (101-105). Look if the wind produces ripples on the water, can we say that something is really produced? And

when the wind ceases and the water becomes flat, what is it that has ceased? Think over it.

13. *Even as the Self has in this body childhoo4 youth and old age, so he passes into another body. A wise man is not bewildered thereby.*

    Consider this, although the body is the same, it becomes different with age. Perception itself is the source of knowledge for this. First we see childhood, which changes to youth. But the body does not perish with childhood. In the same way the conscious Self assumes many bodies. Whoever knows this does not suffer from the sorrow of delusion (106-110).

14. *The sense contacts, O Arjuna, give rise to heat and cold, pleasure and pain; they come and go and do not last, endure them, O Bharata.*

    Man does not know this, because he is a slave to the senses. His mind is attracted by the senses and so he becomes deluded. When the senses perceive an object, and experience pleasure and pain, his mind becomes attached to the sense-objects. The senses lack definite relationship with their objects, and so they sometimes feel pleasure, sometimes pain. Now censure and praise belong to the sphere of the word, which, when heard, gives rise respectively to hatred and fondness. Soft and hard are the two qualities of touch; and its contact with the body produces joy and sorrow (11l-l 15). Likewise ugly and beautiful are the two qualities of form, which produce through sight pleasant and unpleasant sensations. So also fragrance and stink are the two forms of smell, and their contact with the nose gives rise to pleasure and pa1n. Likewise taste is also of two kinds according as it produces liking and nausea. Attachment to the sense objects corrupts a person. Those who depend upon the senses suffer heat and cold and are bound by pleasure and pain. The senses And delight only in the sense-objects and nothing else; this is the peculiar nature of the senses (116-120). What then is the nature of the sense-objects? They are like the mirage. or like the elephants seen in a dream, so never become attached to them; ignore them, O Arjuna.

15. *For a wise person whom they vex not, O Arjuna, and to whom sorrow and happiness are the same, is fit for immortality.*

    He who is not entangled by the sense-objects does not feel pleasure and pain and does not become involved in rebirth. That which does not crone under the sway of sense-objects is eternal; know this, O Arjuna.

16. *The non-existent does not exist, nor the existent ceases; the nature of both is discerned by seers of truth.*

Arjuna, listen, I shall now talk of another matter, which those who think know well. (121-125) (All philosophers acknowledge that)

Latent in these conditioning factors, there is an all - pervading Self. Even when milk is thoroughly mixed with water. the swan separates them from each other, or one (the goldsmith) segregates the pure gold by heating the alloy (in a crucible), or one takes out butter skilfully by churning the curds, or one separates, by winnowing. the grain from the chaff (126-130); so when the wise cogitate upon the creation, the world disappears and there remains only the Self. Therefore, they do not ascribe existence to the transient things, as they have already determined the essence of both.

17. *Know that to be indestructible, on which this whole world is strung; nor can anyone bring about the destruction of this immutable self.*

    If you think over it, you will realise that what is inessential is illusory, and what is essential is eternal by nature. That from which these three worlds have sprung is not marked by name, colour or form. It is all-pervasive and transcends birth and death; even if one wishes to destroy it, it cannot be destroyed (131-135).

18. *What are said to be perishable are these bodies of the Self, which is indestructible, inscrutable, eternal. Therefore, fight O Arjuna.*

    Thus, Arjuna, only these bodies are by nature destructible, therefore fight.

19. *He who thinks this (Self) to be the killer and he mho thinks this killed, both of them do not know; this Self neither kills nor it is killed*

    You identify yourself with your body and others with their bodies and think that you will kill and the Kauravas will be killed, without knowing the truth. If you think properly, you will realise that you are not the killer and they are not the ones to be killed.

20. *He is never born nor does he die; nor having been, he will ever cease to be. Unborn, eternal, ever-lasting and ancient, he is not killed when the body is killed.*
21. *He who knows him (i.e. the Self) to be indestructible, unborn, eternal and immutable, how can such a person, O Partha, kill anyone or have anyone killed (through somebody).*

    What we see in a dream, we think that true in sleep; but when we wake up, nothing that we saw in sleep lasts. Likewise all this is an illusion, and you are unnecessarily confused. Just as if you strike the shadow of a person, you do not hit his body (136-140), or if you break an earthen jar filled with water, the sun's reflection in it disappears, but the sun is not

destroyed with it; or even if the monastery is pulled down, the space inside it, which is of the same form, remains intact in its original form; likewise even if the body is destroyed the Self does not perish. Therefore, 0 friend, do not get deluded by mere appearance.

22. *As a person casts off worn out clothes and takes on new ones, even so the Self discards worn out bodies and enters into new ones.*

    Even as a person throws away his old clothes and dons new ones, so the Lord of intelligence takes on another body.

23. *Weapons do not cleave him nor does fire burn him; water does not wet him, nor does wind parch him.*
24. *He cannot be cut, burnt, or made wet or dry. He is eternal, all- pervading, stable, unmoving and constant.*

    The Self is beginningless and everlasting, without limiting conditions and pure, so he cannot be cut by weapons etc. (141- 145). He is not drenched in the water of the deluge, nor burnt by fire nor parched by the wind. So, Arjuna, the Self should be realised as eternal, unmoving and constant, existing everywhere at all times and perfect.

25. *He is said to be unmanifest, incomprehensible and changeless; therefore, knowing him as such, you should not grieve.*

    He is not comprehended by reason, O Arjuna. Meditation is ever yearning to meet him. He is inaccessible to the mind and unattainable by any means. This Supreme Person is beyond limit, O Arjuna. He is devoid of the three qualities, and is without beginning and change. He is devoid of form, but present in all forms (146- 150). In this way, O Arjuna, he is the inner controller of all beings. When you realise this, you will become free from sorrow.

26. *And even if you think him to be constantly born and constantly dying, for him, O mighty-armed Arjuna, you should not grieve.*

    But if, not knowing thus, you think him to be perishable, even then, O Arjuna, you ought not to grieve. Origination, continuity and end form a continuous process like the uninterrupted flow of river water. The river has an origin and it meets. the sea in the end; but its flow in- between appears to be continuous. Know that these three states belong to all beings and do not leave the creatures at any time (151-155).

    So there is nothing for you to grieve about, as this world process is naturally without beginning. Even if this does not appeal to you, you

should see that every creature is subject to birth and death, which are inevitable; so there should be no cause for grief.

27. *For death is certain for one that is born and birth is certain for one that dies. 7herefore, you should not grieve for that which is inevitable.*

    Whatever is born dies and whatever dies comes to life; thus this wheel of life revolves continually. Just as the sun-rises and sets without interruption, so birth and death are difficult to avoid (155-160). All the three worlds perish at the time of dissolution, and therefore, origination and end are inevitable. If you accept this, why do you lament? Since you know it, why don't you grasp it fully? If you look at it from any angle, you will realise that there is no cause for grief.

28. *Beings are unmanifest in their beginnings; they become manifest in. the middle, O Bharata; and they become unmanifest after death. So why grieve over them?*

    All these creatures were formless before birth; they come to possess form only after they are born. When they perish they do not certainly enter a new form, but revert to their original state. (161-165) But whatever form is seen in- between is like a dream. So this world is a superimposition on Reality due to Maya. Even as water touched by breeze takes the form of ripples, or gold worked by a goldsmith turns into ornaments, or the sky becomes covered by a layer of clouds, so all the creatures are products of Maya. Why do you weep and wail over what is not there. Think only of immutable conscious self. By yearning for it and experiencing it the saints discard sense-objects, permits, on their part, become indifferent to the worldly pleasures (166-170) and the great sages take the vow of chastity etc. and practice austerities.

29. *Someone regards him as marvellous; another speaks of him as marvellous; and yet, after hearing, no one knows him.*

    Some turned their inward eye to the Self and gazing at him lost sense of the world. Many others who sang his praises attained dispassion and became ever immersed in him beyond limit. Others, content to hear about him, lost consciousness of the body and became one with him through spiritual experience. Just as the currents of the rivers join the sea and return not, even if they are not merged with it (171-175), so the minds of Yogi who have become one with him do not attain rebirth through discriminating knowledge.

30. *The self is never subject to death in anyone's body, O Bharata, therefore, you should not grieve for any creature.*

That which exists everywhere in all the bodies and cannot be destroyed, that is the conscious Self who dwells in everyone. By theire very nature all material things come to birth and die. Then why should you grieve over it? O Arjuna, I do not know why you cannot understand such a simple thing. This sorrow of yours is unseemly in many ways.

31. *Further having regard to your duty you should not falter, there is nothing better than a lawful war for a warrior.*

    Why don't you even now consider it carefully? What are you thinking now? You seem to have become totally forgetful of your duty, which alone can save you (176-180). Even if something worse were to happen to the Kauravas or to yourselves, or even if this world cycle were to come to an end now, there is still your duty, which you should not renounce at any cost. Do you think that this compassion will save you? O Arjuna, that your heart should melt with compassion now is improper at the time of war. If cow's milk, which is good, is not prescribed as part of a diet, it may work like poison to a patient suffering form enteric fever. So if one takes a wrong step at the wrong time, one will go to ruin. So be on your guard (181-185). Why do you worry for no reason? Attend to your duty. If your perform your duty, no blame will attach to you. If a person walks on a beaten track, he will not come to harm; nor is a person who walks in day-light is likely to trip. If a person, O Partha, is Arm in the performance of his duty, he will accomplish all his desires without effort. If you consider it this way, there is nothing more proper for you warriors than a battle like this. You should therefore face your enemies free from guile. Need I say more, this is so self-evident (186-190).

32. *This war has come by chance as an open door to heaven, O Partha; happy are the warriors who come by a war like this.*

    This war has come to you, O Arjuna, by a stroke of good luck-nay, the treasure of all righteousness has appeared in that form. How can you call it a war? Your heroism has brought down the heaven in the form of this war. Or having heard the world praise your virtues, renown has come to choose its mate with intense love. When a warrior earns great merit, he comes by a war like this. Even as a person, while walking, comes across philosopher's stone, or a person, while yawning suddenly finds that nectar drops have fallen into his mouth, so this war has come to you as your best opportunity (191-195).

33. *If, however, you will not carry on this lawful war, then failing in your duty and honour, you wilt incur sin.*

    If you withdraw now from this war and grieve for nothing, you will cause harm to yourself. If you throw down you weapons in this war, you will

defile the fame of your forefathers, lose your present repute and incur the censure of the world. Then all human foibles will seek you out and possess you. Even as a woman deserted by her husband becomes the object of scorn all along, such will be your state If your abandon your duty. Or just as vultures gnaw at a corpse on the battlefield from all sides, so if you fail in your duty, all human frailties will encircle you (196-200).

34. *Besides men will recount endlessly your infamy; and to one held in high esteem dishonour is worse than death.*

    Therefore, if you neglect your duty, you will incur sin; and this disgrace will not be effaced even at the end of the world cycle. A wise man should live only so long as he does not suffer infamy. Besides tell me how you propose to get away from here. Even if you were to leave this place out of kindness and without malice, this action of yours will not carry conviction to the Kauravas. They will surround you from all sides and when they shower arrows upon you, your kindness will not save you. Even if you manage to get away unscathed, your after-life will be worse than death (201-205).

35. *7he great warriors will think that you have retreated from war out of fear; and you who are held in esteem by them will incur their disrespect.*

    You have not considered another thing. You have come here ready and eager to fight. And if you now leave the battleground out of kindness, will your wicked enemies appreciate your motive?

36. *And your enemies' mill utter many unspeakable words, decrying your prowess. Could anything be sadder than that?*

    They will shout," Arjuna has fled from here in fright". If this public opprobrium persists, will that be good for you? People win fame, O Arjuna, with great effort, even at the risk of their life. You have earned without effort and obstacles fame, which is unlimited like the sky (206-210). You have gained unbounded and unparalleled reputation, and your virtues are regarded as excellent by the three worlds. Even far-off kings sing your praises like bards; and after hearing them even the God of death is alarmed. Your great glory is as pure as the water of the Ganges; and its report astounds the great warriors of the world. After hearing your marvelous prowess, the Kauravas have lost all hopes of survival. Just as after hearing the lion's roar, even rutting elephants think the world-dissolution to be near, so you inspire dread in the minds of all Kauravas (211-215). As the mountain rates the thunderbolt or the snake the eagle, so the Kauravas appraise you likewise. If you now withdraw from this war without fighting, you will lose all your greatness and lower yourself in their eyes. Even if you wish to run away from here, they will prevent you from

doing so. They will seize you, dishonour you and malign you in every way. Instead of letting your heart split in shame at that time, why not put up a brave fight now and enjoy the kingdom of the world by conquering them?

37. *Slain, you will attain heaven; victorious, you will enjoy the earth. Therefore, stand up, O Arjuna, resolved to fight.*

    If you lay down your life fighting in the battle, you will enjoy the peaceful pleasures of heaven (216-220). Now don't brood too much over this matter, O Arjuna. Stand up with the bow in your hand and fight with valour. When a person performs his duty, all his faults become dissolved. How did you come to be deluded that you will incur sin by performing your duty? Tell me. Will a person who crosses a river in a boat get drowned? Will a person walking straight on a highway stumble? But he who does not know how to walk properly will miss his footing. If a person drinks milk mixed with poison, he will surely die; likewise a person incurs sin if he does his duty with the motive of gain. Therefore, if you perform your duty as a warrior and fight disinterestedly, then it is not sinful (221-225).

38. *Hold alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, and get ready for battle; then you will not incur sin.*

    A person should not be elated by pleasure or depressed by pain, nor should he mind gain or loss. He should not feel anxious about victory in war or about loss of his life on the battlefield. While discharging his duty, he should bear patiently what falls to his lot. When his mind attains to this state, he does not incur sin. So you must carry on the fight without anxiety.

39. *What has been told to you so far is the Sankhya view. Imbued with this knowledge, O Partha, you will cast off the bonds of action.*

    So far I have described to you in a nutshell Sankhyayoga; now listen to Buddhiyoga as settled (226-230). When a person masters this yoga, he does not suffer bonds of karma, even as a victor wearing a hard armour can bear the rain of arrows unscathed.

40. *In this there is no loss of effort nor lapse by non-performance. Even a little of this yogi saves one from great fear.*

    By this yoga one does not miss worldly pleasures nor liberation. If it is interrupted in the middle, it remains intact. One should live performing actions, but without an eye on their fruits. Even as an exorcist is not possessed by a ghost, so a right-minded and selfless person is not affected by ' external conditions (231-235). This right-mindedness is not affected by merit nor by sin; it is subtle, constant and untainted by the three qualities. Even if a little of this right-mindedness is acquired through

merit, it illumines the mind of a person, and he loses all fear of worldly existence.

41. *In this, O joy of Kurus, there is resolute insight; but the thoughts of the irresolute are many-branched and endless.*

    Even as a small flame of a lamp gives abundant light, one should not underrate right-mindedness, even though meagre. The wise, O Partha, aspire for it very much, but this right-mindedness is difficult to attain by everyone. Even as the phosphor's stone is not easy to obtain like ordinary stones, or a drop of nectar becomes available only by a stroke of good fortune (236-240), so this right-mindedness which leads to God-realisation is difficult to attain. Just as the river Ganga ends only in the sea, so this insight is the only knowledge which alms at nothing but God. Everything else is perverse reasoning, which is ever changing, and non-discriminating persons always take delight in ft. The latter, O Arjuna. attain only heaven, earth or hell, and do not get even a glimpse of the bliss of self-realisation.

42. *These ignorant men, O Partha, taking delight in Vedic utterances, say that there is nothing else and utter this flowery speech,*

    They speak on the authority of the Vedas and endorse the Vedic rites; but when they do so they are attached to their fruits (241-245). They say, "One should be born in this world and perform sacrifices and other rites and enjoy the delectable pleasures of heaven. Other than these celestial pleasures, there is nought else, which conduces to constant joy," so say these persons of dull wit.

43. *Abounding in a variety of rites, resulting in actions, fruition and rebirth as the means to enjoyment and power, being full of desire and litent on heaven.*

    Overcome by desire, they perform works in order to indulge in sensuous enjoyments. They undertake many rites strictly according to religious precepts and perform their religious duty with dexterity.

44. *As for those who cling to sensuous enjoyment and power, with their wits carried away (by that flowery speech), their single-pointed mind does not remain fixed in contemplation.*

    But, O Arjuna, they do a wrong thing in that they long for heaven and forget God, who is the enjoyed of sacrifices (246-250). Even as one collects camphor and sets fire to it, or one cooks sweet dishes and mixes poison in them, or one kicks a jar full of nectar found by a stroke of luck, in the same way they lose merit through the motive of gain. Tell me, after making this great effort, why do they run after worldly pleasures? But what

can one do? They are ignorant in this matter. Just as a house-wife were to cook good dishes and sell them, similarly thoughtless persons lose merit for the sake of worldly pleasures. Hence, O Arjuna, bear in mind that those who take delight in the letters of Veda have a perverse mentality (251-255).

45. *The Vedas have the three gunas as their subject; be above the three qualities, O Arjuna. Free from the pairs of opposites, be firmly established in purity, and not caring for gain and preservation, be possessed of the Self.*

    Know for certain that the Vedas are pervaded by the three qualities. All the Upanishads and the like are endowed with the quality of goodness. Other religious texts are imbued with passion and darkness, as they speak of rites which lead to heaven, O Arjuna. Knowing that they only cause pleasure and pain, do not entertain them in your mind. Forsake this triad of qualities and give up the sense of 'Me' and 'Mine", and do not for a moment forget the bliss flowing from the self.

46. *Whatever use a well has in a place flooded with water, that much use there is in the Vedas for an enlightened person.*

    Though the Vedas speak of a variety of religious rites, we should accept only those which will conduce to our benefit (256-260). When the sun rises many roads come in slight; but tell me, can a person take to all of them? Or even if the earth is flooded with water, we take that much as will satisfy our thirst. So also the wise men reflect on the meaning of the Vedas and accept 6nly the eternal truth.

47. *You have the right to action alone and never for its fruit; do not have the fruit of action as a motive, or attachment to action.*

    O Arjuna, listen. If your consider it this way, it is meet that you should perform your duty. After full consideration, I have come to this view that you should not give up your prescribed duty (261-265). But without hankering after the fruit of action or resorting to wicked deeds, you should perform only good deeds disinterestedly.

48. *Engaged in yoga, cast off attachment and perform actions, O Arjuna, remaining even-minded in success or failure; this equanimity is called Yoga.*

    So, Arjuna, adopting Yoga and giving up attachment to the fruit of action, you should perform actions with diligence. Don't be elated too much, if you are lucky to finish the work undertaken; but do not become frustrated if, for some reason, you are not able to see it through. If the work is finished, it

has achieved its purpose; but even if it remains incomplete, it is edifying (226-270). Whatever action you undertake, - you should dedicate it to God. Then you should rest assured that it is rendered perfect. This equanimity of the mind in regard to good and bad deeds is praised as the yogic state by eminent men.

49. *Inferior by far is mere work to this yoga of discernment. Take refuge in right-mindedness. Wretched are those who seek reward.*
50. *One possessed of right-mindedness discards both good and evil deeds; therefore, devote yourself to yoga. Yoga is skill in action.*

    O Arjuna, know that this equanimity of mind is the essence of Yoga, in which the mind becomes possessed of discernment. Compared to buddhiyoga, the path of action seems far inferior to it. But only if you perform action, you will attain to this yoga, culminating in the yogic state (271-275). Therefore, O Arjuna, keep your mind steady on this potent buddhiyoga by giving up desire for the fruit of actions. Those who pursued this yoga crossed over the worldly existence and went beyond the bondage of merit and demerit.

51. *Wise men, possessed of knowledge, by giving up the fruit of actions, are freed from the bonds of birth and reach the abode beyond evil.*

    Even if the wise men perform actions, they are not affected by their results; and

    so they escape the vexations of death and rebirth. When, O Arjuna, they become endowed with buddhiyoga, they attain to the eternal state of bliss.

52. *when your mind passes beyond the maze of delusion, then you will become indifferent to what has been heard and what is yet to be heard./i>*

    You will reach this state, when you will get rid of delusion and make room for dispassion in your mind (276-280). Then you will attain spotless and deep knowledge of the self and your mind will become desireless of its own accord. Then O Arjuna, you desire for more and more knowledge or the need to remember to your former knowledge will come to an end.

53. *When your mind, bewildered by hearing, will become unshakeable and steady in contemplation then you will attain to yoga.*

    Then the mind which wonders after the senses become steady in the contemplation of the self. When your intellect become steady in the joy of contemplation, you will achieve this full yogic state. Arjuna said :

54. *What is the mark of sthitaprajna steadfast in samadhi, O Krishna, how does a person of steady wisdom talk, how does he sit. How does he walk?*

    There upon Arjuna said, I going to ask you., what is in my mind. O compassionate Lord, please reply to it (281-285). Krishna replied, "Arjuna please be free to ask whatever thoughts occurs to your mind." Hearing these words Arjuna asked, O Krishna, please tell me how one should recognise a person of steady wisdom. Who is said to be a man of steady wisdom? But what marks is he to be known who constantly enjoys the joy of contemplation? In what state does he remain? How does he appear? O Lord of wealth, tell me all this. Then Lord Krishna, who is God incarnated and the ground of the four virtues begin to speak (286 – 290)

    The blessed Lord said:

55. *When a person abandons all desires which enter his mind and remains satisfied in his Self alone, O Partha, then he is called a man of steady wisdom.*

    He said: "O Arjuna, listen. This inordinate desire of the mind becomes an obstacle in the realisation of the bliss. Even a person who is happy and contented is caught in the snares of the sense-objects because of attachment. When a person rids himself permanently of this desire and remains immersed in the joy of self, he is known as a man of steady wisdom.

56. *He whose mind is unperturbed in sorrow and has no craving for pleasures, and who is free from passion, anger and fear is called a sage of steady wisdom.*

    A person of steady wisdom is not disturbed when assailed by misery, nor is he frustrated by blind hope of happiness. He is not easily affected by desire and anger, and since he has become perfect, he does not know fear (291-295). When a person becomes free from limiting conditions and distinctions, he should be known as a man of steady wisdom.

57. *He who has no attachment and who, meeting with good or evil, does not welcome the one or hate the other, his wisdom is well-poised.*

    He is the same to everybody like the full moon, which gives light without distinguishing between the good and the wicked. In. this equal treatment and compassion to all creatures, his mind undergoes no alteration at any time. He does not become elated if he gains something good nor does he become dejected if he comes by something bad. Know that person to be a man of steady wisdom, who is full of the knowledge of the Self and feels neither joy or sorrow (296-300).

58. *And when he withdraws from all sides his senses from the sense-objects even as a tortoise (draws in) its limbs, then his wisdom is well-poised.*

    Even as the tortoise extends or withdraws its limbs at will, so his senses remain under his control and function according to his will. Know then that his wisdom has become steadfast.

59. *The sense-objects turn away from an abstemious person except the taste; this too turns away after he sees the Supreme.*

    Further, I should like to tell you another strange thing. The seekers, who give up the sense-objects through self-restraint and restrain their senses but not the sense of taste, become entangled in the sense-objects in thousand ways.' If you pluck the leaves from the tree externally and water its roots, how will you destroy it (301-305)? Even as the tree spreads sideways by that watering, so also sense-enjoyment is nourished through the sense of taste. The objects of the other senses many cease, but it is difficult to restrain the sense of taste, as without it human life cannot be sustained. A person can, however, restrain the sense of taste also, if he attains the experience of Brahman. When conviction dawns upon him that he is Brahman himself, then the consciousness of the body ceases, and the senses think no more of their objects.

60. *For the rebellious senses of a wise person, O Arjuna, even while he is striving otherwise, forcibly carry away his mind.*

    Moreover, O Arjuna, if persons continue to restrain their senses, it is difficult to bring them under control by any means (306- 310). If they restrain the mind by yogic practice, fencing it with religious observances, they have to suffer agony; such is the might of the senses. Just as a female spirit casts a spell on an exorcist, so these sense-objects come in the guise of supernatural powers, and sway a person's mind through contact with the senses. If his mind is caught in their snare he stops yogic practice; such is the power of the senses.

61. *Holding them all in check, the yogi should remain fixed in yoga, intent on me. For when his senses are under control, his wisdom is well poised.*

    Listen, O Partha, he who conquers his senses, abandoning desire for sense-objects (311-315) 1s alone At for dedication to yoga; for his mind is not beguiled by the senses. As he possesses always the knowledge of the Self, he does not forget me. Even if a person keeps aloof from external ' sense-objects but remains constantly brooding over them, he still remains engrossed in worldly life. Even as a little drop of poison, if taken, spreads all over the body so the smallest trace of desire in man destroys his discriminating power completely (316-320).

62. *When a person broods over the objects of sense, attachment to them grows in him. From attachment springs desire, from desire anger.*
63. *From anger arises delusion, from delusion confused memory, from confused memory loss of reason, and from loss of reason he perishes.*

The mere recollection of sense-objects gives rise to attachment in' a disinterested person, and with attachment desire makes its appearance. From frustrated desire springs anger, and from anger delusion. Recollection is impaired by delusion, as the flame is extinguished by the wind. Just as at sunset night swallows daylight, such is the state of a person who is deprived of recollection. When his reason becomes blinded by the darkness of ignorance, it produces confused understanding. As a person blind from birth runs helter-skelter, so delusion overtakes his understanding. With the loss of recollection, his intellect becomes muddled, and all his knowledge melts into thin air. What condition the body assures with the loss of life, his condition becomes similar to that with the loss of reason. Therefore, listen, O Arjuna, as a spark fallen on firewood suffices to consume all the three worlds, so even if the mind perchance broods over the sense-objects, doom seeks him out and overtakes him (326-330).

64. *But if a self-possessed person enjoys the sense-objects without desire and hatred, keeping his senses under control, he attains to serenity.*

Therefore you should expel all thoughts of sense-objects from your mind, so that passion and hatred are stamped out; then even if the senses indulge in sense-objects, they would cause no harm. Even as the sun touching the world with his rays, does not become tainted by that contact, so a person remains indifferent to the sense-objects, when he is free from desire and anger and engrossed in the bliss of the Self. When he comes to perceive that the sense-objects are not different from him, how can they bring harm to him (331-335)? If water can drown itself or fire can burn itself, then a perfected person can become overwhelmed by sense-contacts. In this way, if a person becomes completely absorbed in Self, then know without doubt that his wisdom has become steady.

65. *And from serenity results cessation of all suffering. For in a person with a serene min4 wisdom becomes firmly set.*

Listen, when the mind remains serene without break, all the sorrows of the world do not enter it. Even as hunger and thirst do not affect a person who has a spring of nectar in his belly, how can sorrow affect him whose mind is tranquil? His understanding remains of itself absorbed in the supreme Self (336-340). Just as the flame of a lamp does not flicker in a windless place, so the wisdom of a yogi remains steady in the Self.

66. *He who is not imbued with yoga has neither knowledge nor meditation. For the unmeditative there is no peace, for the unpeaceful whence happiness?*

    He is surely caught in the net of the sense- objects, in whose mind the thought of yoga has not taken root. The wisdom of such a person, O Partha, never becomes steady, and the desire for such steady wisdom does not arise in his mind. When he does not have even the desire for steadiness, how can he attain to peace, 0 Arjuna? As he has no abiding interest in peace, happiness does not flow into him even by chance (341-345), as there can never be salvation for a sinner. If seeds roasted in Are sprout, happiness will accrue to a man without peace. Thus a mind undisciplined by yoga is the source of misery, and for this reason it is best to control the senses.

67. *For the mind which yields to the wandering senses carries away his wisdom as a gale a ship on waters.*

    persons who do what the senses desire do not at all cross over the sea of worldly existence. Just as the boat, which is caught in a storm when about to reach the shore, has to face a mishap which it had escaped till then, ' so if an enlightened person indulges fondly his senses, he is overcome by the misery of worldly life (346-350).

68. *Therefore, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), of him whose senses are completely restrained, his wisdom is well set.*

    Hence, O Arjuna, if the senses come under one's control, can there be anything more beneficial than that? Even as a tortoise spreads his limbs in joy and withdraws them when it so desires, so when a person's senses remain under his control and do whatever he wishes, know that his wisdom has attained steadiness. And I shall now describe to you the secret mark of a person who has attained fulfillrnent.

69. *The man of self-control keeps awoke in that which is night to all creatures. And that in which the creatures keep awake is night to the discerning sage.*

    That (self-knowledge) in regard to which the ordinary persons are in the dark is like dawn to the Yogi; The Yogi remains as if asleep (i.e. indifferent) to that (sense-enjoyment) in regard to which they are wide awake (351-355). Such a person, O Arjuna, is free from limiting conditions and steady in wisdom; know him to be a great sage free from all limitations.

70. *Even as the waters flow into the sea, which, though ever being filled, remains unaffected, so he, in whom all desires enter, attains peace, and not one who hankers after objects of desire.*

    O Partha, there is another way by which such a person can be known. Just as the sea remains calm without interruption, and even when the river waters in spate join the sea in the rainy season, it does hot swell even a bit and transgress its limit, or when in the summer all rivers go dry, the sea, O Partha, is not diminished at all, so he is riot elated after obtaining miraculous powers, nor does he become depressed when he does not achieve them (356-360). Tell me, does the sun's abode get lit up by the flame of a wick, and if the wick is not lighted, will he remain in darkness? In the same way, he is not conscious of the miraculous powers even when they come and go; his mind is so completely ' engrosse4 in the bliss of the Self. How can one who spurns Indra's mansion. Preferring his beautiful home, live in a tribal hut? Just as one who finds fault with nectar does" not eat gruel, so after attaining the knowledge of Self one does not enjoy miraculous powers. Moreover, 0 Partha, when one does not care for celestial pleasures, will it surprise you, if such a one considers miraculous powers as trifling (361-365)?

71. *The man who forsakes all desires and goes about free from craving, possessiveness and pride, attains to peace.*

    He, who delights in the knowledge of the Self and thrives on supreme bliss, know him to be truly steady in wisdom. He gets rid of egoistic feeling and all desires and roams in this world, becoming one with it.

72. *This, O Partha, is the brahmi state; after achieving it, no one is deluded. Abiding therein at the time of death, he remains absorbed in Brahman.*

    This, O Arjuna, is the limitless state of Brahman, which selfless persons experience and attain to Brahman. When they realise the Self, the agony of death does not stand in their way. Sanjaya said, "In this way did Lord Krishna describe to Arjuna in his own words the brahmi state" (366-370).

    Then Arjuna said to himself, "This reasoning suits me well. If the Lord negates all action, his advice that I should fight cancels itself'. Thus Arjuna became overjoyed to hear this speech of Lord Krishna. This occasion is sweet, being the abode of religion or the unlimited sea of ambrosial thoughts. Now I, Jnanadeva, disciple of Nivritti, shall recount what the omniscient Lord declared to Arjuna (371-375).

Chapter Third

Arjuna said :

1. *O Krishna, if wisdom is deemed by you superior to action, then why do you, O Keshava, urge me to do this horrible deed?*

   Then Arjuna said, I have carefully listened to whatever you have said, O merciful Lord. From what you say it appears that both the deed and the doer do not survive. If this is your definite view, O Infinite Lord, then why are you insisting that I should fight? Don't you feel any scruples in involving me in this heinous crime? Since you have negated action in its entirety, then why are you forcing me to do this violent deed? O Krishna, think over this, that after extolling freedom from action, you are urging me to commit violence (1-5).

2. *With perplexing words you are confusing, as it were, my understanding. Tell me positively the one way by which I shall win the highest good.*

   Lord, if you talk like this, what should ignorant men like me do? I should say that reason has now reached its tether. If this is your advice, how does it differ from a confused statement this is how you have satisfied my craving for knowledge. If a physician, after prescribing a diet, himself gives poison, how will the patient survive? Pray tell me that. As one guides a blind man into a blind alley, or offers wine to a monkey, so your good advice has completely bewildered me. As I lacked understanding and was moreover confused, O Krishna, I sought your advice (6-10).

   But you surprise me with an advice, which is confusing. Is this the way to behave with your disciple? I solely depend upon your instruction. If you behave like this, I should say I am undone. By instructing me like this, do you think that you have treated me well? What hope is there for me to acquire knowledge now? My desire for knowledge has gone; moreover, my mind which has been steady so far has now become unsettled. O Lord, your conduct is beyond my comprehension. I do not know whether you are trying to sound me or to befool me, or imparting to me an esoteric doctrine (11-15). I have made an effort to comprehend it but have not been able to realise its truth. Therefore, listen, O Lord, do not talk to me in riddles, but explain to me your thoughts in plain language. O Krishna, dull-witted that I am give me your advice in such a way that I too can

understand it (16-20). While it is necessary to prescribe a medicine to cure a disease, it should be very tasty and sweet.

So be kind enough to explain to me the philosophical truth, which is meaningful and appropriate in a way, I can understand. After finding a teacher like you, why should I feel shy of making a request? You are our divine mother; so why should I hesitate to ask for a favour from you. If the milk of the wish-yielding cow, becomes available by a stroke of luck, why Should I remain in want? If the philosopher's stone comes to hand, what can impede anyone's desire? He should merely make a wish for whatever he needs. O Lord, if, after reaching the sea of nectar any one should still feel pangs of thirst, why should he take all the trouble to get there? Therefore, O Lord, after worshipping you in my previous births, I have had the good fortune to meet you (21-25). Then why should I not beseech you for whatever I want, O Supreme God? This is the most opportune time for me to get whatever I want. My merit has triumphed over all my afflictions and borne fruit, and all my desires have been fulfilled. For you, the abode of all auspicious qualities, O God of Gods, have become favourably inclined to us. Even as no time is inappropriate for an infant to suckle its mother, so, O merciful Lord, I am asking you this question of my free will (26-30). Partha said, "Please tender me your definite advice, which is easy to follow here and beneficial in the next world."

The blessed Lord said:

3. *In this world I had declared before a two-fold dedication, O sinless one, through the Yoga of knowledge for the Sankhyas and the Yoga of action for the Yogis.*

Lord Krishna was surprised at this speech of Arjuna and said: "O Arjuna, this is what is implied in my instruction. While explaining to you buddhiyoga, I broached the Sankhya doctrine, which arose out of it. But you did not grasp this point and so you have become confused. Now please note that I have declared both these paths. Know, O Arjuna that these two traditions have been revealed by me of yore (31-35). One of them known as the path of knowledge is followed by the Sankhyas, who after realising the Self, become one with him. The other is called the path of action in which the seekers perform their duties skilfully and eventually achieve emancipation. Although these two paths are different, they lead to the same result, even as one derives the same satisfaction by eating food cooked by himself or by another. Or as the rivers flowing east and west follow different courses, but eventually join the sea to become one in the end, so these two paths point and lead to the same truth. But the seeker has to choose that path which suits his capacity (36-40). Look, a bird can fly straight to the tree and seize the fruit all at once. Tell me, can a man do it with the same speed? He will have to climb the tree slowly from one

branch to another and follow this method until he reaches the fruit in the end. So by adopting the way of the birds, the Sankhyas pursue the way of knowledge and soon attain final release. The yogis, on the other hand, follow the path of action and, by performing the prescribed duties, achieve liberation in course of time.

4. *Not by refraining from action does a man win freedom from action, nor by (mere) renunciation does he attain perfection.*

   If a person gives up work like a perfected sage, he will certainly not attain freedom from action (41-45). If a person says that by renouncing his current duties he will achieve freedom from action, he Is. only talking nonsense. If you have a strong desire to cross the river and reach the other shore, how can you do so without a ferry? Or if you want the satisfaction of eating, how can you get it without eating food cooked by yourself or cooked by others? So long as you don't become desireless, you cannot give up your legitimate work. Only when you achieve bliss, all physical effort comes to an end. Therefore, listen, O Partha, whoever is intent upon achieving freedom from action, should not avoid performing his proper duties (46-50). Do you think that if you perform an action, it will be done, or if you abandon it at will, it will remain undone? This is mere empty talk. If you reflect over it carefully, you will realise that you cannot renounce actions by merely refraining from them.

5. *Nor even for a moment can anyone remain without doing work; for everyone is driven helplessly to action by the qualities born of nature.*

   So long as your body is the seat of *prakriti*, it is no use saying that you will perform this action or abandon that action; if you say so, it is due to ignorance. For the functions of the body naturally depend upon the qualities. Tell me, if a person abandons all his prescribed duties, will his sense organs cease to function? Will his ears stop hearing or his eyes lose their sight or will his nostrils become blocked and cease to smell (51-55)? Will his breathing come to a stop or will his mind be free from doubt? Will he cease to be affected by hunger and thirst? Will he give up waking or sleep and will his legs forget to walk? Even if all this comes to pass, can he avoid birth and death? If all this does not cease, what is it that he has given up? Hence a person who is subject to his nature cannot give up actions. Action is dependent upon something else (*prakriti*) and arises from its qualities; and so it is futile to think that you will undertake or abandon action at all. Mind you, even if a person sits without movement in a carriage, he must move with it, being dependent upon it (56-60). Just as a dry leaf, when caught in the wind, remains whirling in the sky, even if it has no motion of its own, so an inactive person continues to remain active under the influence of nature and the modifications of his senses. Therefore, so long as he is attached to his nature, he cannot give up

actions. If anyone says that he will give them up, it is merely due to his' wilfulness.

6. *Whoever restrains his organs of action and sits brooding over the sense-objects is said to be a self-deluded hypocrite.*

   Some, in order to become free from action, abandon their prescribed duties and try to arrest the tendencies of their organs of action. They will not be able to relinquish action, as they will start brooding over it. They are wretches as they affect the airs (of a monk) (61-65). You should learn to recognise, O Partha, such persons who are really attached to sense-objects and should not entertain wrong notions about them. Now listen, I shall tell you, as the occasion requires, the characteristics of a person who 1s free from desire.

7. *But he, who, controlling his senses by the mind, performs, O Arjuna, the yoga of action with the organs of action, excels*.

   A desireless person remains steady in the contemplation of the Supreme Self, but behaves outwardly according to the local customs. He does not command the senses or fear sensuous enjoyment, nor does he avoid legitimate work, which falls to his lot. He does not restrain the tendencies of the organs of action but at the same time he is not overcome by their impulses (66-70). Even as a lotus petal does not get wet in water, he is neither affected by passion nor tainted by delusion. Since he remains in the world, he looks like anybody else. Just as the sun appears as a reflection in contact with water, he looks outwardly like an ordinary person and no one can gauge his true nature. If you see a person with these characteristics, know him to be liberated. You recognise him by his freedom from the bonds of desire. O Arjuna, such a person becomes distinguished as a yogi in this world.

   Therefore, I say unto you that you should become a yogi (71-75). Practice self-control and be steady in your mind; then let the organs of action go about their way merrily.

8. *Perform your duty; for action is better than inaction. Even the maintenance of your body will not be possible without working.*

   Hence one cannot achieve freedom from action by renouncing action. Then why should you think of undertaking prohibited actions? You should, therefore, perform, without self-interest, the appropriate duties, which have fallen to your lot. O Partha, you do not seem to know this wonder of wonders that disinterested work by itself frees one from action. See; if one performs one's duty without self-interest according to his capacity, by that very action he is sure to attain liberation (76-80).

9. *Save for work done for a sacrifice, this world is in bondage to work. For that reason, O Arjuna, perform action without attachment.*

   My boy, know that one's duty itself is an obligatory sacrifice. If one performs his duty, sin does not affect him. When a person abandons his duty and takes delight in prohibited deeds, he becomes entangled in worldly bondage. Therefore, know that the discharge of one's duty is a continuous sacrificial session. Whoever performs his duty as a sacrifice does not suffer bondage. A person becomes bound by his actions in this world, if he comes under the spell of Maya and strays from his path of duty. In this connection, O Partha, I shall tell you a story. When Lord Brahma created the world (81-85),

10. *After creating beings along with sacrifice, the Creator said of gore, by this shall ye multiply; let this be to you the wish-yielding cow.*

    He created human beings together with the obligatory sacrifices. But they did not understand the sacrifices, as they were subtle. The people entreated the Creator, "O God, what refuge have we here?" Then Lord Brahma, born from the lotus, gave this reply: I have already ordained the duties according to your class. Perform these duties and your desires will be fulfilled. You need not observe vows or self-restraint or torment your body or go on a long pilgrimage. You need not perform yogic practices or resort to charms or magic or undertake ritual worship with a selfish motive (86-90). Do not worship other gods and instead do your duty as a sacrifice restfully. Perform your duty without a selfish motive, even as a chaste wife serves her husband faithfully. This sacrifice in the form of duty is at to be performed by you." so said Brahma, the lord of Satyaloka, the heaven of truth. He added: Folks, if you follow your duty, it will fulfil your desires like the wish-yielding cow and never let you down.

11. *with this (sacrifice) serve ye the gods and let the gods serve you; thus nourishing each other you shall reap the highest good.*

    If you do this, you will propitiate all the gods: and they in their turn will grant you all the desired objects (91-95). If you worship the gods by performing your duties, they will undoubtedly look after your welfare. If you pray to the gods, they will become pleased with you. When you become united with this mutual bond of love, you will be able to accomplish whatever you wish to do, and all the desires that you entertain will be fulfilled. Whatever you say will come true, you will command obedience, and the great miraculous powers will wait upon you and carry out your orders. Just as the forest laiden with fruits welcomes the spring with its gorgeous beauty (96-100);

12. *The gods nourished by sacrifice will give you desired enjoyments. He is verily a thief who enjoys their gifts without giving anything in return.*

    So good fortune will come looking for you with all pleasures. My children, if you will perform your duties with dedication, you will gain all enjoyments and become happy. But he, who amassing wealth, follows the whims of his senses, and coveting sensuous enjoyments, will not use the God-given riches as a reward of his sacrifice in the worship of gods by performing his duties, ' who will not offer oblations into the Are and worship to the gods, or feed the Brahmins on proper occasions (101-105), who is remiss in his devotion to his teacher and hospitality to the guests, and will not give satisfaction to his communality, in short, if he, infatuated with his wealth, neglects his duty, and remains wholly absorbed in sensuous enjoyments, he will have to suffer the plight of losing whatever he has and will be unable to enjoy pleasures which come his way. Just as the Self does not dwell in the body when one's span of life is over, or the goddess of wealth does not stay in the house of an unlucky person, so the neglect of duty destroys the very foundation of happiness. in the same way as the light is extinguished when the lamp stops burning (106-110). Thus he who ignores his call of duty loses his freedom. Bear this in mind, O folks, so said Lord Brahma. He added: Death will punish him who forsakes his duty, and treating him as a thief, will take away all his possessions. Just as ghosts gather in the cemetery with night-fall, all faults around him will come searching for him. Then all sorrows in the three worlds, sins of various kinds and penury of every sort without exception will befall him. My children, that arrogant person will be reduced to such a, state that he cannot escape it even at the time of dissolution of the world (111-115). Therefore, you should not abandon your duty and give the senses free reign. This is the instruction which Lord Brahma gave to the people. If the aquatic creatures got out of water they would die instantaneously, so a person should not cease to do his duty even for a moment. Lord Brahma reaffirmed, "You should be devoted to the performance of your duty all the time."

13. *The virtuous who eat the remains of sacrifice are freed from all sins. But the wicked who cook for their own sake verily eat sin.*

    He added: Folks, you should spend your riches in performing your prescribed duties without a selfish motive. You should worship the sacred Are, your teacher and elders and serve the Brahmins and perform the shraddha rites betimes (116-120). After performing the prescribed sacrifices and offering oblations into the Are, you should enjoy at home whatever remains thereafter with your family. This act of enjoyment itself will destroy all your sins, even as a person taking a sip of nectar is cured of serious maladies, so whoever eats the remains of sacrifice becomes free from sins. Just as one devoted to truth is not affected by the slightest

delusion, so whoever eats the leavings of sacrifice is not affected by blemishes. Therefore, a person should earn riches lawfully, utilise them in performing his duty and then enjoy in contentment whatever is left (121-125), O Partha he should not act otherwise.

Lord Krishna told this ancient tale to Arjuna and said: those who identify the Self with the body and regard the sense-objects as the objects of enjoyment, do not know that there is something beyond it. They do not know that their riches are the means of sacrifice and use it for their comfort out of egoism and delusion. They get savory dishes prepared according to their tastes, and when they eat them, these sinners eat sin only. They should regard all their wealth as the means of sacrifice and offer it to the primal Lord by way of sacrifice in the form of duty (126-130). Instead of doing this, the ignorant people get cooked a variety of dishes for their own enjoyment. That food which should be utilised for sacrifice in order to propitiate the gods is not an ordinary thing. You should not regard it as ordinary food, but of the very nature of Brahman, because that food sustains the life of all creatures.

14. *Creatures live by food, food is produced by rain; rain is caused by sacrifice, and sacrifice arises from action.*
15. *Know that the ritual has its origin in the Veda, and the Veda originates from the Imperishable. The all-pervading Veda is, therefore, ever established in sacrifice.*

All creatures grow on food, and food is produced by rain. Rain arises from sacrifice, sacrifice from action and action from the Vedas (131-135). The Vedas spring from the imperishable Brahman, and therefore this moving and stationery world is based on Brahman. The foundation of sacrifice based on action is thus the eternal Veda. Bear this in mind, O Arjuna.

16. *Whoever on earth does not keep turning the wheel thus set in motion leads a sinful life, gratifying his senses and lives in vain, O Partha.*

O Partha, I told you briefly the origin and tradition of sacrifice. Therefore, whoever being infatuated with his wealth, does not perform in this world his duty as sacrifice is a great sinner. Know him to be a burden on this earth because he has pampered his senses by committing wicked deeds (136-140). His birth and actions. O Arjuna, are barren and unproductive, even like untimely clouds which do not produce rain. If a person does not perform his duty, know that his life is worthless like the teat hang1ng from the throat of a goat. Therefore no one- should abandon his duty; on the contrary one should resort to it with his heart and soul. Look, when one acquires a body (according to his past actions) work follows as a matter of course; then why 'should one avoid one's legitimate work? O Arjuna, he who loathes work even after acquiring a body is boorish (141-145).

17. *But the man who delights in the Self, is satisfied with the Self and is contented in the self has no duty to perform.*

    Look! even if a person is endowed with a physical body, so long as he takes delight in the Self, he is not tainted by action. If he becomes satisfied with the knowledge of the Self, his work is done; and, therefore, he easily becomes free from attachment to work.

18. *For then he does not concern himself with action or inaction on this earth; nor does he have any purpose of his own dependent on anybody.*

    Just as when one becomes satisfied, the means of satisfaction become redundant, so when a person who is immersed in blissful Self, he has no further use for work. Arjuna', a person has to perform sadhana, only until he attains the knowledge of the Self.

19. *Therefore, always perform, without attachment, action that needs to be done. Verily working without attachment, one obtains the highest good.*

    Therefore, you should perform your legitimate duty without desire (146-150). O Partha, all those who performed their duties without self-interest have truly attained the state of liberation.

20. *Janaka and others indeed attained emancipation through action only. You should also work keeping in view the guidance of the world*.

    See, even without giving up action, Janaka and others attained the bliss of salvation. Therefore, O Arjuna, have faith in action; it also helps in another way. If you perform work, others will receive guidance from it and will avoid pain in the long run. Even those who have become desireless and attained fulfilment, also have a duty to perform for the people (151-55). Just as a man having sight guides the blind by walking in front of them, so a wise person should display to the ignorant his duty by his own conduct. If he does not do so, how will an ignorant person come to know his duty and how will he understand the right path?

21. *Whatever a great man does, others also do the same; whatever standard he sets for himself the people follow that.*

    Whatever the elders do, the others call it right conduct. All ordinary people follow their lead. Since this is a natural thing. no one should renounce action. Especially sages should continue to perform action.

22. *I have no task to perform, O Partha, whatsoever in the three worlds; nor have I anything to gain which I do not have. Still I continue to work.*

But, O Partha, why talk about others? Look to me. I too remain in the path of action (156-160). If you think that I perform my duty to avoid some calamity, or because I have to satisfy some desire of mine, you know that there is none else who is as perfect as myself, and that I have all the necessary means at my beck and call. I restored the dead son of my Guru Sandipani; and you were a witness to my prowess. Though I have no desire of my own, I remain active.

23. *If I did not continue unflaggingly in work at all, men all around, O Partha, will follow my path.*

    As for myself, I do my duty as a person having desire does; but this I do only with one specific aim in view. It is this that all beings who depend upon me do not go astray (161-165).

24. *These worlds will be ruined if I did not perform action, I should be the agent of mixture of castes and destroy these creatures.*

    If I remain desireless and absorbed in myself, how will the people go about their business? If the people were to follow the path of wisdom and act accordingly, the affairs of the world will come to a stop. Hence even he who is capable and all-wise should not abandon action at any cost.

25. *As the ignorant attached to action work, O Bharata, so the wise should work without attachment, desiring the welfare of the world.*

    Just as a person with desire performs action keeping in view its fruit, the desireless person should also devote himself to work in the same way. So Arjuna, I have been telling you repeatedly that the society has to be protected by all means (166-170). The wise man should follow the path of action and carry the people with him and should not let others think him different from them.

26. *Let him not unsettle the minds of the ignorant that cling to action. Rather the enlightened man should by working in the spirit of yoga, encourage devotion to the works.*

    Arjuna, how can the child which suckles its mother with difficulty eat sweetmeats? So one should not give them to him. One should not disclose even in fun freedom from action to one who is not even fit for action. The inactive person should lead him to the path of action by praising it and setting his own example before him. Thus if one performs work in this spirit for the guidance of the world, it does not lead to bondage (171-175). This is just like the actors in the role of king and ' queen, who do not think themselves to be male and female, but make others think them to be so.

27. *All actions are wrought by the qualities of nature in all cases. One whose mind is deluded by egoism thinks, "I am the doer."*

    Arjuna, if we take another's burden on our head, shall we not bend down under that burden? Likewise, even though good and bad actions are produced by the qualities of nature, an ignorant person thinks himself to be the agent through delusion. One should not disclose this secret truth to a conceited person of narrow outlook. Arjuna. this is enough for the present. I shall now tell you what is beneficial to you. Listen attentively (176-180).

28. *But one mho knows truly the division and functions of qualities does not get attache4 thinking that the qualities (senses) act on qualities (objects)*

    The modifications of *prakriti* from which actions spring do not affect the wise men at all. After relinquishing attachment they have gone beyond the qualities and actions and abide in their bodies as the witnesses of their actions. Although they remain in their bodies, they are not affected by the actions. as the sun, who gives light to the creatures, is not tainted by their actions.

29. *Those deluded by the qualities of nature become attached to their functions. Let not the person mho knows all unsettle the minds of those mho know little.*

    He who comes under the spell of *prakriti* and. becomes deluded by Its qualities becomes tainted by the actions. When senses remain active under the pull of the qualities, he perforce thinks himself to be responsible for his actions (181-185).

30. *Surrendering all actions to me with your thought on the Self and giving up desire and possessions fight free from mental fever.*

    Therefore, perform your legitimate duties and dedicate them to me, all the time keeping your mind fixed on me. And you should - not entertain the false pride that you are the agent of an action and will achieve a definite purpose. Give up attachment to the body, abandon all desires and then enjoy all sensuous pleasures as they come. Now take up the bow in hand, mount the chariot and resort to the heroic spirit with a calm mind. Establish your reputation, enhance the dignity of the warrior's duty and relieve this world from its oppressive burden (186-190). Now, O Partha. discard all doubt, pay attention to the war, and talk about nothing else.

31. *Men who follow this teaching of mine with faith and without cavilling are also released from actions.*

Those who accept with reverence this definite teaching of mine and practice it with faith, O Arjuna, know that they are actionless even while performing actions. It is, therefore, proper for you to perform the prescribed tasks.

32. *But as for those who cavil at this advice and fail to act upon it, know them to be deluded in all knowledge, witless and lost.*
33. *Even the man of knowledge acts according to his nature. (All) beings follow their nature; what can restraint achieve?*

Those who being subject to *prakriti* indulge the senses cavil at my teaching and ignore it. They think it commonplace and disregarding it, call it simply a rhetorical eulogy (*arthavada)* loquaciously (191-195). Know this without doubt that they are intoxicated with delusion, filled with the poison of sense-objects and sunk in the bog of ignorance. Just as a corpse has no use for a gem placed in its hand, or a blind person does not know for certain when it dawns, or as the crow derives no benefit from the rise of the moon, so the ignorant person does not like discriminating knowledge. Moreover O Arjuna, you should not converse with such persons who are not well-disposed to spiritual truth. They not only do not accept my teaching but also denounce it. Tell me, can the moth bear sun-light (196-200)? When the moth hugs the flame, it meets with sure death. In the same way self-indulgence leads to self-destruction. So a wise man should not pamper his senses even out of curiosity. Tell me, can one safely play with a serpent or keep company with a tiger? Can one possibly digest a dose of virulent poison? If Are breaks out while playing with it, it soon flares up beyond control. So if a person indulges his senses, he does not fare well. Truly speaking, O Arjuna, why should we toil to acquire the means of sensuous enjoyment for this body which is dependent on qualities (201-205)? Why should we pile up provisions with great effort and maintain this body from birth to death? Why should we exhaust ourselves to amass wealth and then nurture this body in utter neglect of our duty? And when this body which is the aggregate of Ave elements returns to them, where do we seek the reward of our exertion? Therefore, know that the maintenance of the body is open plunder; and so we should not pay much attention to it.

34. *Attachment and aversion are settled in every sense for its object. Let no one fall into their power; for they are one's enemies.*

It is true that when the senses are fed with their favourite objects, the mind finds true satisfaction. (206-210). But this is like the company of a gentle-looking thug, until they leave the border of the town. When a person beguiled by the sweet taste of poison develops a fondness for it, it proves fatal in the end. Desire, which is inherent in the senses, gives rise to a false hope of pleasure, even as the bait attached to the angle deceives the

Ash. The fish does not know that the angle which is concealed will take away its life; likewise if you entertain this desire and hope for sensuous enjoyment, you will land yourself in the Are of wrath (211-215). As the huntsman surrounds the deer through his trackers and drives it to a place where it can be killed, the senses act in the same way. So you should not get attached to them. O Partha, know that both desire and anger are ruinous to man. Do not, therefore, yield to them or evens remember them. But do not let the happiness of your natural state get stifled.

35. *Better is one's duty, though destitute of merit, than another's duty well-performed. Better is death in the discharge of one's duty; another's duty is fraught with danger.*

Even if one's duty is difficult to perform, one's good lies in performing it. Even if another's duty seems better, one should discharge one's duty only (216-220). Tell me, should a Brahmin, even though poor, partake of sweet dishes which are prepared in the house of a Shudra? Why should a person do such an improper thing? Why should he long for unwarrantable things and wish to acquire them? Think over it. After seeing the attractive white houses of others, should a person pull down his thatched cottage? Leaving this aside, even if one's wife is ugly, it is better to enjoy married life with her. So even if one's duty is difficult to perform, that alone conduces to happiness in the other world (221-225). Milk mixed with sugar is well-known for its sweetness; but how can a person suffering from worms take it? Even if one takes it, it will be due to his obstinacy; because it is not wholesome food for his condition. Therefore, a person should carefully think what is good for him, and not practise what is wrong for him, even though right for others. Even if he has to lose his life in performing his duty, it is the best course for him in both the worlds, so said Lord Krishna, God of all gods. Thereupon, Arjuna said, "Lord I have a request to make (226-230). I have listened with attention to all that you have said; but I have to ask you something which is bothering me."

Arjuna said:

36. *Then driven by what, O Krishna, does a person commit sin, even against his will, as though constrained by force?*

O Lord, how is it that even the wise fall from their state and take to the wrong path? How is it that those who know everything including the means of release go astray and take up another's duty? A blind person cannot distinguish between grain and husk; but why should a clear-sighted person be so deceived 'P Those who renounce worldly ties form others and do not attain satiety; and even those who have retired to the forest return to the country (231-235). When they try to hide and escape from sin, they are forcibly drawn into the commission of sin. That which strikes

us as disgusting overtakes us and dwells in us; and even when we try to escape from it, it pursues us relentlessly. There is a power, which compels us to commit a wrong thing. Tell me what is this inflexible power, so Partha said to Krishna.

The blessed Lord said:

37. *It is desire it is anger, born of rajas quality all-consuming, most evil; know this to be the foe on earth.*

Listen now to what that Supreme Person who gives delight to the hearts of men and who is the object of desire of desireless yogis said. They are, he said. desire and anger, which lack even a trace of compassion; they are regarded as the equal of the god of death (236-240). They are like serpents who guard the treasure of knowledge, like tigers in the valley of sense-objects or cut- throats in the path of duty. They are like boulders in the fortress of the body, like enclosures in the parish of the senses, and they cause commotion through delusion etc. These passions possess the qualities of rajas, the root cause of demonical endowments, and are nurtured by ignorance. Though really born of rajas they are the favourites of *tamas*, which has gifted them their very essence, namely negligence and delusion. They receive great honour in the city of the god of death, as they are the sworn enemies of life (241-245). When their hunger becomes acute, the whole world is not sufficient to make a mouthful. They carry on their activities with the aid given by hope. When this hope closes her fist in sport, all the fourteen worlds are too small to All it. Delusion is her favourite younger sister. When this delusion plays the children's game of cooking etc, she swallows all the three worlds, and passion prospers in her service. Delusion pays respect to them and they have dealings with egoism, which makes the whole world dance round its Angers. They have scooped out the inside of truth and filled it with falsehood and they have given currency to hypocrisy in the world (246-250). They have stripped chaste peace, adorned the whore Maya and have ruined bands of good men through her. They have destroyed the might of discriminating knowledge, peeled the hide of dispassion and twisted the neck of tranquillity. They have cut down the forest of contentment, pulled down the fortress of fortitude and uprooted and thrown away the saplings of joy. They have plucked out the shoots of knowledge, erased the alphabet of happiness, and kindled the three kinds of miseries in the heart of man. They have come into being with the body and are bound to the body and so they cannot be found even by god Brahma (251-255). They reside close to the intellect and live in the company of knowledge; and so they spread like an uncontrollable epidemic. They drown a person without water, burn him without Are, and devour him without even saying a word. They strike a person without a weapon, tie him up without a rope and laying a wager ruin the wise. They sink a person without mire, bind him

without fetters, and as they dwell within, they are not like anything that we know.

38. *As fire is enveloped by smoke, as mirror is covered with dust, as the embryo is encased in the womb, so is (knowledge) obscured by it.*

    Even as a serpent seeks the root of a sandal tree and encircles it, or the womb encloses the foetus (256-260), or as the sun becomes obscure without his light, or as there is no fire without smoke or a mirror without dirt, so we have not seen knowledge singly without this desire. Just as the seed is born covered with husk,

39. *Wisdom is smothered, O Arjuna, by this constant enemy of the wise in the form of desire, which is insatiable like fire.*

    Wisdom is enveloped by desire and wrath, and so it has become difficult to fathom. It is only by conquering desire that one can attain wisdom; but it is not possible to subdue passion and hatred. Whatever strength one acquires to destroy them, goes to their aid, even as fuel boosts fire (261-265).

40. *The senses, the mind and the intellect are said to be its seat; clouding the wisdom by these means, it deludes the embodied Self.*

    So whatever means are employed to overcome them seem to help them. Even the Hathayogis are overcome by them. There is, however, only one way of escape from this trouble. I shall explain it to you, if you feel like pursuing it.

41. *Therefore, O best of Bharatas, restraining these senses at first, cast off this evil desire, destructive of wisdom and knowledge.*
42. *The senses are superior, but higher than the senses is the mind. Higher than the mind is the intellect, but higher than the intellect is he (i.e. the Self).*
43. *Thus knowing him to be higher than the intellect and controlling yourself by the Self, crush this desire, your unassailable foe.*

    Their first habitation is in the senses from which all activity proceeds. You should, therefore, bring your senses under control. Then your mind will cease to wander, and your intellect will escape from their clutches, and these evil ones will lose their support. Since the mirage cannot exist without the sun's rays so if they are banished from the heart, they will certainly cease (266-270). When desire and wrath are both extinguished you will attain the kingdom of God and enjoy supreme bliss. This union between the Self and God is the secret between teacher and disciple. When one remains steady in this state, one will never stray from it.

Sanjaya said, "O King, listen. So said the prince of the perfect ones, the Lord of the goddess of wealth, the God of gods".

Now the Lord will relate an ancient tale, after hearing, which Arjuna will ask a question. The worth and poetical flavour of that tale will delight the hearers (271-275). Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivritti, says, "Elders, sharpen your wits and then enjoy this conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna (276).

Chapter Fourth

Fortune has smiled today on the organs of hearing; for they have found the treasure of the Gita. What seemed like a dream has come true. In the first place the subject pertained to spiritual wisdom; secondly its exponent was Lord Krishna, the conqueror of the world; and lastly the listener was Arjuna, the foremost among the devotees. As if the fifth note, fragrance and sweet taste had come together, this tale conduced to the delight of all present. By a stroke of good luck, the listeners have come by the river of nectar, and their prayers and penance have borne fruit. Therefore, all the sense organs should remain in the organ of hearing and enjoy this conversion between Lord Krishna and Arjuna (1-5). Then the hearers said, "Please cut short this untimely embellishment and recount to us the conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna.

Thereafter Sanjaya said to King Dhritarashtra, "At that - time Arjuna was endowed with the quality of sattva; and Lord Krishna was talking to him with great affection. He revealed to him his secret, which he did not disclose to his father Vasudeva, nor to his mother Devaki, nor to his brother Balarama. Even goddess
Lakshmi, who was very close to him, could not enjoy this affection, which came to be shared by Aruna alone. Even sages like Sanaka did not succeed in gaining this affection for which they were hopefully waiting for many years (6-10). What merit had Partha gained to deserve this incomparable love of the Lord of the world? See, because of his affection for Arjuna this formless God became incarnate; so it seems to me that they are one and the same. Otherwise why did this Supreme Self without beginning and motion, who is inaccessible to the Yogis or incomprehensible to the Vedas or imperceptible to the eye of' meditation, become so merciful to Arjuna in this extraordinary way? How did this the folded state of the three worlds and beyond form, become so favourable to Arjuna?

The blessed Lord said :

1. I had declared this indestructible Yoga to the Sun. The Sun told it to Manu, and Manu taught it to Ikshwaku.

   Then Lord Krishna said to Arjuna, I had declared this same yoga to the sun before, but that was a long time ago. Afterwards the Sun imparted this

yoga to Vaivasvata Manu. Manu practised it himself and then taught it to Ikshwaku. Thus this tradition has come down to us from ancient times.

2. *Royal sages who knew this Yoga handed it down the line. By the great efflux of time, O Arjuna, this yoga was lost.*

   Then many other royal sages came to know this yoga; but since then, there is nobody who knows it now. As men became specially attached to their bodies and sensuous enjoyments, they became forgetful of the knowledge of the Self (16-20). Their faith took the wrong course, and they became addicted to sensuous enjoyments, which they considered as the acme of happiness. Tell me, who will care to buy fine cloth in the village of nude holy men? Of what use is the sun to a person blind from birth? Who will applaud music in an audience of deaf persons? How will jackals develop a liking for moonlight? How will the crows that close their eyes just before the rise of the moon, recognise him? So how can ignorant persons who have not seen the boundary of dispassion, or even heard about discriminating knowledge attain to Me (21-25)? No one knows how this delusion spread, but considerable time was lost; and so this yoga became extinct in this world.

3. *This same yoga has been taught by me to you today, O Arjuna; for you are my devotee and friend; this Yoga is the supreme secret.*

   Verify the same Yoga I have taught to you, O Arjuna; do not entertain any doubt about it. This yoga is the secret of my heart; how can I hide it from you who are my bosom friend? O Arjuna, you are the image of love, the soul of devotion, the very essence of friendship and the repository of my trust. How then can I deceive you ? Although we are poised for battle, (25-30) notwithstanding this disturbance, I shall take the trouble to remove your ignorance.

   Arjuna said:

4. *Later is your birth and earlier was the birth of the Sun. How then is I to know that you declared it to him in the beginning?*

   Arjuna then said, "O compassionate Lord, is there anything surprising if the mother is fond of her child? You are a shelter to those who are tired of life and mother to the orphaned. It is entirely your mercy that has brought us in this world. O Lord, if a mother gives birth to a crippled child, need I tell you that she has to nurture it with great care from its birth? Now I wish to ask you something, pray listen carefully. Please do not be cross with me on that account (31-35). The ancient tale that you have narrated, O Krishna, strikes me as somewhat incredible. Even our forefathers do not know who that Vivasvat (Sun) was. Then how and when did you teach him

yoga? We hear that he lived long ago, and you belong to the present. These two statements seem to involve a contradiction. Moreover, O Lord I cannot fathom your deeds. Well, how can I, therefore, say all at once that what you have said is incorrect? So explain it to me in very clear terms so that I can understand how you could give this instruction to the Sun (36-40).

The blessed Lord said:

5. *Many lives of mine have passed, and so have yours, O Arjuna. I know them all, but you know them not, O Partha.*

   Then Lord Krishna said, "It is natural for you to be confused, O Arjuna, as you think that I did not exist in the days of the Sun. You do not know that both of us have had many births before. You do not remember your former births, but I recollect very well all my previous incarnations.

6. *Though I am unborn and immutable and also the Lord of all creatures, yet resorting to my own nature, I come into being through my Maya.*

   I remember all my former births, as I take birth with the aid of Maya. But I do not lose my eternity. What appears as my descent and return is mere appearance due to this Maya (41-45). This does not affect my freedom, and if I appear subject to action, that too is due delusion, in reality it is not so. One thing appears two, when seen in a mirror; but if you consider the reality, are they really two? So Arjuna, although I am without form, through the power of my Maya, I play-act different roles for the good of the world.

7. *Whenever righteousness declines, O Arjuna, and wickedness flourishes, then reincarnates myself.*

   It has been my custom from time immemorial that I should uphold righteousness in all ages. Therefore, when vice prevails over righteousness, I forget, that I am birthless and without form (46-50).

8. *For the protection of the good and the destruction of the wicked, and for establishing righteousness I reincarnate myself.*

   I reincarnate myself to espouse the cause of my devotees, and to destroy the darkness of ignorance. I snap the seams of vice, destroy the bad texts, and by raising the banner of happiness through good men, and by destroying the race of demons, I restore respect for holy men and bring about the union of righteousness and morality. Then I erase the soot of ignorance, brighten the lamp of discrimination and bring about an endless festival of lamps for the yogis. The whole world is filled with holy joy, righteousness begins to thrive in the world and the devotees become pot-

bellied (satiated) with sattva quality. When I assume the human form, O Arjuna, merit shines, razing to the Ground Mountains of sin. I reincarnate myself for this purpose in every epoch; only a discriminating person knows this secret of Mine.

9. He who knows truly thus My birth and work divine, never comes after death to birth again, but comes unto Me, O Arjuna.

   Without loss of my birthlessness and in action, I take birth and carry on my work, Whoever knows this immutable nature of Mine becomes liberated. Even though he takes on a body, only his body moves and not he; he is not bound by it, and after death he attains to my state.

10. *Many, freed from passion, fear and wrath and absorbed in Me have taken refuge in Me; and purified by knowledge and austerities, they have attained to My state.*

    Those who do not grieve over past or future things are free from passion and do not succumb to anger (56-60). They remain absorbed in me and live only to serve me, taking delight in the knowledge of the Self. They are the shining repositories of austerities, the abode of knowledge. They are the holy men, who purify even sacred places of pilgrimage. Such men reach my state without effort and abide in me; and there is no dividing screen between them and me. Tell me, if the brass does not turn black at any time, then who will care for gold and strive to acquire it ? So those who have become emaciated by spiritual practices, and become purified by penance and knowledge, come to my state without doubt (61-65).

11. *In whatever may men serve Me; I serve them in the same way. In ever way, O Partha, men follow My Path.*

    I tell you, in whatever way they serve me, in the same way I favour them. All men are, by nature, inclined to worship me. But, many deluded by ignorance think of me differently and imagine me to be manifold, even though I am one. They think of me, though one, as divided and give me, though nameless, different names and speak of me, though indescribable, as god and goddess. Although I am ever the same everywhere, they explain me in parts as high and low, influenced by their confused thinking (66-70).

12. *Seeking success in their works, they worship deities in this world, For in this human world success attends upon action quickly.*

    Then with a verity of motives, they worship different deities of their conception with proper rites and articles of worship. In this way whatever result they expect accrue to them; but know it for certain that it is only the

result of action. Truly speaking, there is nothing in this world which gives and receives the fruit save action itself. Even as nothing grows in the field save what is sown, or the mirror shows only a person who looks into it, or what is uttered at the foot of the hill comes back as an echo (71-75) so I watch all the worship that takes place and ensure that every devotee receives the fruit of his action according to his faith.

13. *The four classes have been created by Me according to the division of qualities and actions. Yet know Me, their creator, to be immutable and not there agent.*

    You should also bear in mind that I have created the four classes according to the division of qualities and actions. I have also so arranged that the actions will flow from the different qualities based on nature. Although men are all alike, they are naturally classified into four classes in the light of their qualities and actions. For this reason, O Partha, I am not the creator of this institution of four classes (76-80).

14. *Actions do not defile me, as I do not desire their fruit. He who knows Me thus is not bound by his actions.*

    Although these castes have originated from me, I am not their creator. Whoever knows this is released from bondage.

15. *With this knowledge the ancient seekers of release performed work. Therefore, work ye likewise as the ancients did in former times.*

    O Arjuna, those who sought release before, knowing this, performed actions. But even as roasted seeds, when sown, do not sprout, so all their actions become the means of liberation. Moreover, Arjuna, it is not proper- for a wise man to construe what is action and what is non-action according to his sweet will.

16. *What is action ? What is non-action? This has bewildered even the wise. I shall declare to you that action, by knowing which you will be free from evil.*

    What is action? What is the characteristic of non-action? (81- 85) Cogitating over it even the wise have become confused. Even as counterfeit coin appears genuine and deceives the eye, so even those who can create a new world by mere wish get involved in action through confused notion, about non-action. In this matter let alone the ignorant, but even the wise is bewildered. So please listen to what I have to say about it.

17. *One should know about action and about prohibited action; and one should know about non-action. Inscrutable is the course of action.*

    By whatever this world naturally evolves know that to be action. You should know this action thoroughly to start with. Whatever duty has been enjoined by the Vedas for the classes and stages of life, you should know it along with its fruit (86-90). You should also get to know what is prohibited action. If a person knows its nature, he will not become entangled in it. This world depends on action, which is pervasive and profound. Let it be, now listen to the characteristics of an enlightened person.

18. *He who sees inaction in action and action in inaction is wise among men. He is a yogin, though he performs all actions.*

    When a person, while performing actions, sees his inaction, and does not hanker after their fruits with attachment, and there is nothing else for which he is obliged to work, he knows truly what freedom from action means. A person should be recognised as enlightened, if he possesses the above traits, even if he performs actions well all the time. (91-95) Just as a person standing near water, sees his reflection in it and recognises himself, without any misgiving, to be different from it, or just as a person moving in a boat sees the trees on the bank moving swiftly, but on close inspection knows that they are stationary, so even when he is performing actions without desiring their fruits, he knows that he is not the agent of those actions. And even as the

    motionless sun seems to go round the world because of the sunrise and sunset, so a person knows himself to be inactive even while working. Though he appears to be an ordinary person, he is really not so, just as the reflection of the sun in the water is certainly not the sun (96-100). He does not see the world while seeing, does nothing while doing, and does not enjoy even when he experiences sensuous enjoyments. Even though he wanders everywhere, he is motionless; because he has himself become one with the world.

19. *When these actions are free from desire and (selfish) purpose, and are burnt by the fire of wisdom; the learned call him wise.*

    Such a person is not indifferent to action, nor does he entertain desire for its fruit. His mind is also not obsessed by the thought that he will perform some action or finish something already started. Know that when a person has burnt all his actions in the fire of wisdom, he has already become Brahman, though in human form. (101-105).

20. *Having abandoned attachment to the fruit of action, ever content and dependent on none, he does nothing even though engaged in work.*

    When a person becomes indifferent to his body, is desireless for the fruit of action and is ever cheerful, he remains in the sanctum of rapture, and is never satiated with the feast of true wisdom served to him.

21. *When a person is without desire, self-controlled and without possessions, he does not incur sin by performing purely physical actions.*
22. *When a person is satisfied with whatever he gets by chance, is beyond the pairs of opposites (I.e. pleasure and pain), is free from malice and is the same in success and failure, even though he acts, he is not bound by the actions.*

    He takes more and more delight in supreme bliss by abandoning expectation and egoism. He remains content with whatever he gets by chance and does not say that this is mine and that is another's. Whatever he sees, he himself becomes that. Whatever he hears, he becomes one with it (106-110). When he walks, speaks or acts, he becomes all that. When he sees nothing but his own Self in the world, what action will hold him in bondage and how? When he sees no distinction between meum and teum, which gives rise to envy, how can we call him envious? Thus he has achieved freedom from action even while performing actions and is beyond the qualities; even though he is endowed with them, he is liberated in every way without any doubt.

23. *When he is unattached and free, with his mind established in wisdom, the work undertaken by him for the sake of sacrifice is totally dissolved.*

    Even though he is in contact with the body, he looks every inch the spirit; and if he is tested, he is seen to be equal in purity with the Brahman (111-115). Even if such a person performs sacrificial rites and the like in fun, all such actions become dissolved in him. Just as the untimely clouds appear in the sky and melt away by themselves, so even when he performs the prescribed Vedic rites, they get dissolved in him, as he has the notion of oneness with them.

24. *(For him) the act of offering as also the oblation is Brahman offered by Brahman in the fire of Brahman to Brahman alone will he attain, who contemplates action as only Brahman.*

    His reason does not make a distinction that this is an oblation, I am the sacrifice and someone is the enjoyed of this sacrifice. When he performs the desired sacrifice, he regards the oblation and the mantras as imperishable and of the nature of Brahman (116-120). Thus when he comes to realise that the action itself is Brahman, then the action

performed by him becomes non-action. Now when he leaves behind his youth in the form of non-discrimination, and espousing dispassion, scarifies in the fire of Yoga.

25. *Some yogis worship with sacrifice the deities alone; others sacrifice by offering oblations in the fire of Brahman.*

    He remains day and night engrossed in worship, offering his ignorance, along with his mind, in the fire of Guru's instruction. In this way, when one offers sacrifice in the fire of yoga, it is called daivyajna, through which one seeks spiritual bliss. He who is fully convinced that his body is maintained by his former karma, and does not care to nourish it, he should be known as a great yogi (121-125). Now listen, I shall describe to you one who offers sacrifice in the Are of Brahman by means of sacrifice.

26. *Some sacrifice senses of hearing etc. in the fire of self- restraint; others sacrifice in the fires of the senses their objects such as sound.*

    Now the sacrificer in the fire of self-restraint scarifies the pure sense organs through the formulae of body, speech and mind. Another, when dispassion dawns on him, kindles in the temple of self-restraint the fire of sense organs. When this fire burns the faggots of passion in the flames of dispassion, then the smoke of desire leaves the five sacrificial pits (i.e. the organs of sense). And then he offers skilfully all the five sense-objects as oblations, as enjoined by the scriptures, in the fire of the sense organs (126-130).

27. *Some sacrifice all functions of the senses and of vital airs in the wisdom-kindled fire of yoga of self-control.*

    In this way, O Partha, some washed off their sins. Some others rubbed the fire-stick of discrimination against the stick in the form of the heart quickly and courageously as instructed by the Guru. As this attrition took place after fusion of all mental states, it bore quick result and kindled the fire of knowledge. To start with there arose the smoke in the form of infatuation for miraculous powers; when it ceased, there appeared the tiny spark of knowledge. Then they threw in this Are the loose pieces of mind, which had become light with spiritual practices (131-135). When the fire rose into flames with their help, it burnt the faggots of different desires with the ghee of delusion. Into this blazing Are they offered the activities of the senses, while repeating the mantra, "I am Brahman". Then with the sacrificial ladle of vital breath, they offered the last oblation in the fire of knowledge, and attaining union with Brahman, performed the final ablution. Then they partook of the bliss of self-knowledge, as the sacrificial food taking it as the remains of the sacrifice in the form of self-control. Thus some, performing a sacrifice in this manner attained salvation. Even if these

sacrificial rites are of different kinds, the goal to be achieved by them is the same (136-140).

28. *Some offer sacrifice with goods, austerities or yoga; ascetics, with strict vows, sacrifice with study and knowledge.*

    Among sacrifices, one is known as a material sacrifice; another is performed through austerities, and others though yoga. That in which one sacrifices speech is known as sacrifice of speech; and that in which the knowable is realised are known as knowledge-sacrifice. All these sacrifices are arduous and difficult to perform, but those who have subdued the senses acquire the capacity to perform them. They have become proficient in self-restraint and also possess abundant yoga; for they sacrificed their ego for the sake of the Self.

29. *Yet others devoted to breath-control sacrifice prana into apana, and apana into prana by restraining the movement of both.*

    Some others offer the inbreath as an oblation in the Are of out-breath through the yoga of practice (141-145). Again others unite the in-breath with the out-breath. And still others restrain both and are known as regulators of breath.

30. *And others regulate their food and sacrifice their vital breaths into vital breaths. All these are knowers of sacrifice who have destroyed their sins through sacrifice.*

    Others control their intake of food with the aid of Hathayoga and sacrifice their vital breaths swiftly in the vital breaths. In this way all those who are desirous of liberation are wont to perform sacrifices, to wash off by that means all their mental impurities. When their ignorance is destroyed, their essential nature alone remains, and then they do not have the notion of distinction between the fire and the sacrifice. Then the desires of the sacrifice come to an end, and thereafter all actions cease. (146-150) Then that (wisdom) which is not penetrated by thought and reason is not defiled by the blemish of duality.

31. *Those who drink the elixir of the sacrificial remains attain to Brahman. This world is not for the non-sacrificer, much less the other world, O Arjuna.*

    This pure wisdom, established from eternity, which is the remains of knowledge-sacrifice is the one which those devoted to Brahman experience by repeating the scared formula, "I am Brahman." In this way those satiated with the elixir of the remains of sacrifice become immortal and attain the state of Brahman. Dispassion does not espouse those who do not perform yoga-sacrifice and do not worship the Are of self-control

from birth. When these do not And happiness here, why ask about the next world? There is no need to talk about it, O son of Pandu (151- 155)

32. *Thus sacrifices of many kinds are offered in the mouth of Brahman. Know that all of them spring from action; knowing this, you shall be free.*

    So I have told you a variety of sacrifices, which have been described well at great length in the Vedas. But what have we to do with their detailed description? When we know that they depend on action, they cease to bind us.

33. *The knowledge-sacrifice is superior to any material sacrifice, O chastiser of foes. For all works without any exception culminate in wisdom.*

    O Arjuna, all the gross rites, which have their origin in the Vedas, lead to the extra-ordinary result of a happy life in heaven. But they are all material sacrifices, which cannot compare with knowledge-sacrifice, even as the abundant light of the stars cannot equal daylight. In order to achieve this treasure of supreme bliss, the yogis do not forget to apply antimony of wisdom to their inner vision (156-160), This wisdom is the culmination of his spiritual practices, the mine of inaction, and refuge of those hungry for bliss. Then activity becomes feeble, reason loses its zest, the senses forget their objects, the mind 1oses its essential nature, speech becomes silent and then the knowledge of Brahman is realised. When his dispassion does not limp, he loses his zest for discrimination, and without effort he becomes united with the Self.

34. *The wise mho have realised the Truth will instruct you in wisdom. Learn it by falling at their feet, by questioning and serving them.*

    If you wish to acquire this wisdom, you should attend upon holy men with heart and soul (161-165). You can enter their home of wisdom through the threshold of service. You should win their confidence by attending upon them. You should fall at their' feet with body, mind and soul and enter their service without pride. Then they will tell you, when questioned, whatever you wish to know. When your mind becomes enlightened, it will not succumb to desire.

35. *Knowing thus, you will not be confused, O Arjuna, ever again. Then you will realise, without exception, all beings within yourself and Me.*

    When your mind becomes enlightened with their instruction, it will become fearless, and, without doubt, worthy of Brahman. Then you will always see all creatures along with yourself in me (166-170). When you win the favour of your good teacher, O Partha, then wisdom will dawn upon you and dispel the darkness of delusion.

36. *Even if you are the worst sinner among all 'sinners, (still) you will cross over all sins by the lifeboat of wisdom.*

    Even if you are the mine of sin, the sea of infatuation or the mountain of delusion. all these are trifles before the power of wisdom; wisdom possesses such splendid power. Look, if this world appearance, which is the shadow of the formless God, does not last in the light of wisdom, how can your mental impurities last? It is improper even to say this. There is nothing so grand in this world as wisdom (171-175).

37. *Even as the blazing fire reduces fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, so the fire of wisdom burns all actions.*

    Is it difficult for the whirlwind of dissolution to scatter the clouds, when it can blow away the smoke coming out of the world-destroying fire? Or will the fire, fanned by the whirlwind, which can even burn water, be extinguished by hay or firewood?

38. *There is nothing so purifying on earth comparable to wisdom. He, who is perfected in yoga, realises it within himself in time.*

    All such things can never come to pass; it is absurd even to ask this. There is nothing, which equals wisdom in purity. This wisdom is superb. What is there to match it, as there is nothing else but the conscious Self? If the sun's reflection can equal the splendour of the heavens, or one can hold the heavens in one's arms (176-180), or And a measure sufficient to weigh the earth, O Arjuna, you will be able to find the like of wisdom. Thus even if we consider it from any angle, we have to admit that the purity of wisdom lies only in wisdom. When one is asked what nectar tastes like, one can only answer that it tastes only like nectar. So one can only give the simile of wisdom to wisdom; to say anything more than this is simply waste of time. Then Arjuna said, "O Lord, what you say is true". When he was about to ask as to how one can acquire this wisdom, the Lord, anticipating his question, (181-185) said, "Now I shall tell you how to acquire this wisdom; so, Arjuna, please pay your attention."

39. *The man of faith attains to wisdom, being devoted to it and restraining his senses. Having attained wisdom, he soon finds the highest peace.*

    He, who experiencing the sweet bliss of the Self, loathes the sense-objects and scoffs at the senses, who neither discloses his thoughts to the mind nor ascribes to himself the actions of prakriti, and who is happy being possessed of faith, then wisdom, which is full of peace, comes in search of him. When this wisdom settles down in his mind, conducting to peace, the knowledge of Self spreads and fills his mind (186-190). Then wherever he casts his eyes, he discovers peace and loses all sense of

'Mine' and 'Thine'. In this way the seed of wisdom grows faster and faster. It is beyond description, let this suffice for the present.

40. *He who is ignorant, unbelieving and sceptical perishes. There is neither this world nor the next nor happiness for the man of doubt.*

    Look, if a person is not fond of wisdom, what can one say about his life? Death would be better than that. Like a house, which is vacant, or a body, which is lifeless, is his life full of delusion and devoid of wisdom. Even if one has not attained this wisdom but longs for it, he stands a fair chance of acquiring it. Let alone the desire for knowledge, (191-195) if he lacks even interest in it, then know that he has fallen into the fire of doubt. If a person loathes nectar instead of relishing it, then know that his death is near at hand. So if a person indulges in sensual enjoyment and is heedless of wisdom, he is doubtless possessed by doubt. If a person is full of doubt, he is definitely doomed and loses all happiness in this and the other world. If a person suffers from typhus fever, he cannot distinguish between heat and cold, and regards the sun and the moonshine the same (196-200). So the man of doubt does no know the difference between what is true and false, right and wrong, beneficial and harmful. Just as a person born blind is not aware of day and night, so the man of doubt does not comprehended anything.

41. *He who is ignorant, unbelieving and sceptical perishes. There is neither this world nor the next nor happiness for the man of doubt.*
42. *Actions, O Arjuna, do not bind him, mho has mastery over himself, has relinquished his karma through yoga and destroyed his doubt by wisdom.*

    So there is no sin greater than doubt, which is a snare for the ruination of a person. You should not, therefore, entertain it, but trounce it. It is to be found in a person who lacks knowledge. When ignorance spreads its darkness, this doubt grows vigorously in the mind and blacks out all paths of faith. (201-205) The heart cannot contain it, which seeks and trails the intellect, and then all the three worlds become subject to doubt. But even if it grows, it can be brought under control by one means. If the sword of wisdom comes to hand, by that sharp weapon one can easily cut it off and rid himself of this evil. Therefore, O Partha, rise up, and stamp out this doubt from your mind. So said, O King, the compassionate Lord, the progenitor of all knowledges, the lamp of wisdom (206-210). Now reflecting on his earlier talk, Arjuna will ask a question appropriate to the occasion.

    I shall tell you later about the sequence of the them, the wealth of ideas and the excellence of sentiments. The eight sentiments pale into insignificance before the excellence of that speech, which confers rest and relief to the intellect of good men. Listen to these words, which are

meaningful and deeper than the sea, and which will exhibit the serene sentiment. Even as the sun's disc, though small, can light all the three worlds and more, in the same way the pervasive nature of the word should be experienced (211-215). Just as the wish-yielding tree grants the desires of a wishful person, the words are all pervading; so please give your attention. Why do I need to tell you this? You yourselves know all this. I am only requesting you to pay heed to this talk. Just like d. woman who is of good family, beautiful and chaste, you have here a talk, which is perfect, full of literary art and the serene sentiment. If a medicine is coated with sugar, which everyone likes, will it not be taken regularly and cheerfully? If a fragrant breeze blows from the Malaya mountain, and at the same time one is lucky enough to taste nectar and hear a sweet note, the breeze will cool the body, the nectar will please the tongue and the sweet note will receive plaudits from the ear. To hear this talk is indeed to gratify the desires and to avoid the sorrow of wordly life without disturbing the mind. If the enemy is destroyed by a mantra, why need one use a dagger? If the disease is cured by sugared milk, why need one drink the (bitter) juice of the Enema leaves? Thus without curbing the mind and without tormenting the senses" this hearing readily conduces to final release. So Jnanadeva, disciple of Nivritti, says to you, "Please listen to the import of the Gita with all the eagerness that you possess." (221-225)

Chapter Fifth

Arjuna said:

1. *You praise renunciation of action, O Krishna, and again of their selfless performance. Tell me decidedly which one is better of the two.*

Then Partha said to Lord Krishna, "Why do you talk like this? If you say something definite, then one can reflect upon it. Earlier you had described the way of renunciation variously; then why are you urging me to take to the way of action? Your ambiguous talk does not make sense to me, who am dull-witted. Listen, if you wish to instruct me in a particular doctrine, you talk about it only. Need one tell you about this? I had earlier requested you not to express the highest truth in rhetoric's (1-5). Leave alone what happened before, but tell me now which of these two paths is superior. Such a path must be reliable, result-oriented, and one which is well-defined and easy to follow. It should be facile like a palanquin in which one can travel any distance without loss of sleep.

The Lord was pleased with this speech of Arjuna and said with great delight, "It will be as you say". If a person is lucky to have a mother like the wish-yielding cow, then he could demand and get even the moon to play with (6-10). See the grace of Lord Shiva; did he not bestow on Upamanyu the milky sea, with which to satisfy his desire for rice with milk ? If Lord Krishna, who is the store of munificence, is accessible to him (Arjuna), why should he not bask in happiness? When he has the Lord of the Godless of wealth as his master, is it surprising that he should demand whatever comes to his mind? Therefore, whatever knowledge Arjuna sought, Lord Krishna readily gave it to him. I shall now tell you what Lord Krishna said thereafter.

The blessed Lord said:

2. *Renunciation and yoga of action both lead to the highest bliss. But between the two, yoga of action is better than renunciation.*

Lord Krishna said: O Arjuna, if you consider renunciation and yoga, both are in fact conducive to liberation (11-15). As a boat is an easy means for the omen and children to cross the river, the yoga of action is a straight path for the wise and the ignorant. If you consider what is valuable and what is worthless, you will see that the yoga of action is an easy path; if

you pursue it you will also obtain the fruit of renunciation. I shall tell you, therefore, the characteristics of renunciation, so that you will realise that these two paths are similar.

3. *He should be known as a perpetual renounce, which neither hates nor desires. For, O Arjuna, one who transcends the pairs of opposites, is easily freed from bondage.*

   When a person does not bemoan a lost thing or long for a thing unprocessed, who is mentally stable like the Meru mountain, and whose mind has forgotten the sense of 'Me' and 'Mine', O Arjuna, know him to be a perpetual renounce. (16-20) One having this attitude of mind rids himself of attachment, and thereby attains uninterrupted happiness. Such a person need not give up his home etc., as he has mentally become detached from them. When the Are is extinguished and reduced to ashes, cotton can safely be placed in it; so when a person's intellect gets rid of all desires, though limited by conditions, he does not get bound by actions. When his desires completely vanish from his mind, he attains renunciation. For this reason, both renunciation and yoga of, action are similar (21-25).

4. *The ignorant affirm that Sankhya and yoga are different but not the wise. He who practices either will reap the fruit of both.*

   Besides, O Partha, how can persons wholly ignorant know the nature of Sankhya and Yoga? Being by nature ignorant, they affirm them to be different. How can there be different lights from the same lamp? But those who have realised the truth by genuine experience treat them both as one and the same.

5. *That state, which the Sankhyas attain, is reached by the yogis as well He sees truly, who sees that the Sankhya and the Yoga are one.*

   The state, which is reached by the Sankhyas, is also attained by the yogis, Hence these two paths are identical. As there is no difference between the sky and the space, the Yogi recognises that the yoga of action and renunciation are the same (26-30). If he recognises Sankhya and yoga as not distinct, knowledge dawns upon him in this World and he realises his Self.

6. *But renunciation O Arjuna, is difficult to attain without yoga. The sage absorbed in yoga attains to Brahman without delay.*

   O Partha, he who, following the path of yoga, ascends the mountain of liberation, reaches speedily the peak of the highest bliss. But he who

discards yoga and longs in vain for salvation, never reaches the state of renunciation.

7. *He, who is engaged in selfless work and is pure in mind mho has his body and mind under control, and whose Self is the Self of all beings, is not tainted by actions, although he works.*

   He has withdrawn his mind from delusion and after cleaning his mind by the instruction of his teacher, has fixed it on the Self. So long as salt does not fall into the sea, it seems different, but becomes like sea when it is united with it (31-35). In the same way when his mind, rid of desire, becomes one with the Self, then although it is confined to one spot (i.e. the body), it pervades the three worlds. Then all such notions that I am the agent and must perform this particular work naturally cease, and though he performs actions, he is not their doer.

8. *The yogi who knows the truth should think, 'I do nothing at all', when he sees, hears, touches, smells, eats, walks, sleeps or breathes,*
9. *Speaks, releases, grasps, opens and closes his eyes, bearing in mind that the gunas (senses) act on the gunas (their objects).*

   O Partha, he who does not remember even that he has a body, how would he possess the egoistic feeling of being the agent? Thus even when the yogi has not discarded the body, all the characteristics of the formless God become manifest in him. But like all ordinary people, he seems engaged in all activities (36- 40). He sees with his eyes, hears with his ears, but surprisingly he remains unattached to what he sees and hears. He feels the touch, smells with his nose and talks on occasions. He eats food, gives up whatever he does not want, and sleeps in comfort at the appropriate time. He seems to walk according to his sweet will and goes on performing all actions as required. Arjuna, why need I tell you each and everything? He breathes in and out and shuts and opens his eyes and so on (41-45). Though he performs these actions, he is not the agent due to self- knowledge. So long as he was asleep on the bed of ignorance, he was deluded by happy dreams; but since then with the dawn of knowledge, he is awakened to his true Self.

10. *He, who acts without attachment, dedicating his actions to Brahman, is not defiled by sin as a lotus petal by water.*

    Now all his sense organs function under the sway of the Self in regard to the objects of senses. Even as all the household activities are performed in the lamplight, so all actions ensue from the yogi. Just as the leaf of a lotus does not get wet in water, so the yogi is not bound by actions, even while performing- them (46-50).

11. *With the body, mind and intellect and with the senses alone, yogis perform actions without attachment for the purification of the mind.*

That action which is not based on reasoning or which is devoid of thought is called physical action. I shall explain this in simple words. Like a child the yogi performs actions by means of body only. But when the body fashioned from the five elements goes to sleep, then his mind remains alone in the dream world. The most surprising fact, O Partha, is that this sway of desires gives a person pleasure and pain without the knowledge of the body. This action which ensues without the senses being aware of it is said to be simply mental action (51-55). The yogis too perform such actions, but they are not bound by them, as they are free from egoistic feeling. When a person becomes imbecile or is possessed by a spirit, then his sense-activities become disorganised. He sees the figure of a person, hears when he is accosted, speaks with his tongue, but his mind does not register what he does. Whatever is done is without purpose, know that action to be of' the senses. And whatever is done with full knowledge, know that it is the action of the intellect, so said Shri Hari (56-60). Those who take recourse to intellect a d perform actions with wisdom, they become free from the bondage of action. Those who perform actions ranging between the intellectual and the physical without the egoistic feeling, remain pure even while they work. My friend, the action that is done without the notion of agency is non-action. This truth is known from the instruction on of the teacher. Now I have told you what transcends speech, so much so that the serene sentiment is spilling from my overfull mind. He alone is competent to hear this, whose senses have lost the craving for objects (61-65).

Then the hearers said, "Enough of this digression. Please do not interrupt the context, as it will disturb the sequence of the verses. You have fully explained to us that which is difficult for the mind to comprehend and even for the searching intellect to grasp. If what is by nature beyond speech can be expressed in words, what more do we want? Please proceed with the narration". Appreciating this ardent desire of the hearers, the disciple of Nivritti said: "Hear now attentively the conversation between these two". Then Lord Krishna said to Partha, "I shall tell you the characteristics of one who has attained yoga, listen (66-70)".

12. *The yogi, by renouncing the fruits of actions finds the highest peace. The uncontrolled person becomes attached to the fruit of action through the pull of desire and gets bound.*

Peace visits him in his house and woes him who loathes the fruit of action and has attained to the knowledge of the Self. O Arjuna, another (i.e. worldly person) becomes tied to the peg of enjoyment of the fruit of action by the knot of desire and gets bound.

13. *Mentally renouncing all actions, the self-possessed person rests serenely in the body, the city of nine gates, neither acting himself nor causing others to act.*

    He performs actions as everybody does with the motive of reward, but remains indifferent to it with the notion that he is not its agent. He creates happiness wherever he casts his glance, and wisdom dwells wherever he wants it to dwell. Even though he remains in the body of nine gates, he is not really there, and though he works, he does nothing as he has relinquished desire (71-75)

14. *The Lord creates for the people neither agency nor action, nor the union of action and its fruit. But it is the nature that acts.*

    If you -reflect upon God, he is seen to be inactive, but he seems to have created this panorama of the universe. If you call him the agent, he is not touched by action; and since he is indifferent to it, his hands and feet remain unaffected, nor is his yogic sleep or actionlessness affected. Even then he raises the group of gross elements. He dwells in all creatures, but does not belong to them; and he is not conscious whether the universe has come into being or ceased.

15. *The Lord does not take on himself anybody's sin or merit. Wisdom is obscured by ignorance, whereby creatures get deluded.*

    He is not conscious of merit or sin, though they are close to him; he does not witness them, leave alone other things (76-80). The Lord incarnates himself and sports with his body, but his formless nature is not affected thereby. When people say that he creates supports and destroys moving and non-moving things, it is only due to ignorance, O Arjuna.

16. *But to those whose ignorance of the Self is destroyed by wisdom, this wisdom, shining like the sun, reveals the Supreme.*

    With the destruction of ignorance the darkness of ignorance clears away, and then the inactive nature of the Lord becomes manifest. If one is convinced that the Lord is inactive, then it is established that I am He from the beginning. When this discrimination dawns on his mind, how can he then see distinctions in this world? From his own experience he knows that the world too is free from them (81-85), just as When the sun rises in the east he lights that region and makes the other quarters too free from darkness.

17. *With their mind and intellect directed to Him, founded in Him and devoted to Him, they go* (to the abode) from which there is no return; for they have cleansed their sins by wisdom.

When they become convinced about the knowledge of the Self, regarding themselves as of the very nature of Brahman, and remain dedicated to it day and night, then the all-pervasive wisdom comes seeking them. What more can I say about their equable nature? What is surprising if we say that they see the world like themselves? Just as good fortune does not, even in fun, suffer impoverishment, nor does discriminating knowledge recognise delusion (86-90), nor does the sun discern the nature of darkness even in a dream, nor does nectar hear about the story of death, nor does the moon become conscious of heat, so these wise men do not see distinction among beings.

18. *On a Brahmin endowed with learning and humility, on a cow and on an elephant, a dog and an outcaste, the wise look on equally.*

    Then how will they have the notion that this is a gnat or an elephant, an outcaste or a Brahmin, mine or another's son, a cow or a dog, and great or small? How can one awake see a dream? One would see distinction so long as egoism lasts. When it has already ceased, how can the notion of distinction survive? (91-95).

19. *On this very earth rebirth is conquered by them whose mind rests on equality. For Brahman is flawless and the same (to all), and so they remain established in Brahman.*

    He who sees equality in all things has already become non-dual Brahman. Know that this is the secret of equanimity. Without relinquishing the sense objects and tormenting the senses, he experiences non-attachment without desire. With the support of ordinary people, he remains engaged in public affairs, but casting away ignorance of the ordinary men. Just as a ghost remains amongst people without being seen, he is not recognised by the world, although he dwells in the body. Just as when water is kissed by the wind, it dances on water and gets a different name, namely a wave (96-100), so he bears a name and a form, but he has truly become Brahman, inasmuch as his mind has attained equanimity towards all. The Lord said O Arjuna; I shall tell you in brief the characteristics possessed by a person with equable mind.

20. *He neither exults on getting what is pleasant, nor frets on getting what is unpleasant. Firm of understanding and without delusion, the knower of Brahman abides in Brahmin.*

    Just as a mountain is not carried away by a flood of mirage, he is not moved by good or bad happenings. He has truly known the essence of equanimity; he has become one with Brahman, so said Shri Hari to Partha.

21. *He whose mind is not attached to external contacts (of objects) finds joy within himself. With his mind immersed in meditation of Brahman, he enjoys eternal bliss.*

    Since he, by neglecting his real Self, does not come under the sway of senses, he does not enjoy the sense-objects. Is there anything surprising in this (101-105)? As his mind is surfeit with the boundless joy of the Self, he does not turn to the external sense organs. Tell me, if the chakora bird has feasted on the sweet rays of the moon from the plate of lotus petals, will it deign to chew the desert sand? So if a person who has attained to the bliss of Self forsakes sense - objects, is there any need to talk about it? Now think very clearly as a matter of curiosity about those who are dazzled by the sensuous pleasures.

22. *For the enjoyments which arise from sense contacts are indeed sources of' sorrow. They have, O Arjuna, beginning and end; in them a wise man does not rejoice.*

    Just as a hungry person eats even husk, so those who do not known the Self take delight in sense-objects (106-110). Or just as the deer, oppressed by thirst, forgets real water, and being eluded, runs towards the mirage on gravely land, mistaking it for water, so those who have not known the Self and are ignorant of bliss alone think these sense-objects to be delectable. But if you still maintain that one derives happiness from sense-objects, then why cannot worldly affairs be carried on in the flash of lightning? Tell me, if one can ward off the sun, the wind and the rain by taking shelter under a cloud, then why should one build three-storeyed houses? To say that sense-objects can give pleasure is idle chatter. Just as a poisonous root is called mahur (meaning sweet) (111-115) or the planet Mars is called auspicious (mangala) or the mirage is called water, likewise misleading is the talk of happiness from the sense-objects. Tell me can the shadow of the cobra's hood give a cooling sensation to the mouse? Just as the bait is good so long as the fish does not swallow it, so is the contact with the sense-objects. Know this to be undoubtedly true.

    If you behold O Arjuna, these sense-objects dispassionately, they look fat like sufferers from jaundice. Know, therefore, that whatever seems like sensual pleasure is pain from beginning to end; but the ignorant man cannot refrain from it (116-120). As they do not know this secret, they cannot but take to them. Tell me, do the insects in pus and mud feel nausea for them? They And pleasure in that pain. They are like frogs in the muck of sense-objects and fish in the (muddy) water of sense enjoyments; how then can they leave it? If all beings were to regard sense-objects with dispassion, will not births fraught with pain be without purpose? Who will then tread without rest on the paths leading to the plight of dwelling in the womb or the travails of births and deaths? Where

will the great imperfections dwell, if every one gave up desire of sense-objects? And then will not the very term, worldly existence, become redundant? (121-125) Therefore since they take the ' pain proceeding from sense enjoyment as pleasure, they make this ignorance, which is wholly false, seem true. Reflection shows that these sense-objects are wholly bad; do not, therefore, make the mistake of running after them. Men of dispassion avoid them like poison, and being desireless they do not like pain in the form of sensuous pleasure.

23. *Whoever can endure here itself, before leaving the body, the rush of desire and anger, is a yogi, a happy man.*

The men of wisdom do not even talk about the sense-objects, since in their very body they have triumphed over body- consciousness. Then they are not even conscious of the external objects, because they have found real happiness within. (126-130) They, however, enjoy it differently, not as the birds kiss the fruits; at that time they even forget that they are enjoyers.

The state of mind, which arises at that time, destroys the veil of ego-sense; and they grasp the bliss and hold it in a firm embrace. Then they become one with it, as water mixing with water does not remain separate, or as with the disappearance of the wind in the sky, their separate existence ceases. Then bliss alone remains in its own form at the time of that union. When the talk of dualism ceases and only one remains, then who is there to witness this oneness? (131-135)

24. *He who has happiness, joy and light within, that yogi becomes one with Brahman and finds eternal bliss.*
25. *In Brahman the sages find bliss, with their sins destroyed and doubts cleared, mho after controlling their m*inds, devote themselves to the good of all beings.

I should better stop here. For how can you talk about a thing which is beyond speech? He who revels in the Self will easily catch the hint. I regard the Yogis who, full of bliss, are immersed in the Self, as pure images of beatitude. They are replicas of joy and sprouts of happiness; and they are the playgrounds of supreme knowledge. They are the abode of discrimination, embodiments of supreme Brahman, or the decorated parts of Self-knowledge, the essence of the quality of goodness or the stamps of sentience.

Then Shri Nivritti said, "Enough of this disgression. Why must you describe the same thing in so many ways? (136-140) When you take delight in praising holy men, you forget the context; but you speak so beautifully about these matters. But cut short this ernbellishment and

enlighten us on the meaning of the Gita, and let the auspicious message of the Gita dawn 4pon the minds of good men." After receiving this advice of the Guru, Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivritti says, "Now listen to what Lord Krishna said to Arjuna". (The Lord said): O Arjuna, those who dived deep into the deep waters of eternal bliss, they remained steady there and became one with it. And since they saw within themselves the world in the clear light of wisdom, we have to admit that they became one with the Supreme Self while living (141-145). This bliss of Self is sublime, eternal and limitless. Only those who are free from desire become qualified for it. This happiness is reserved for the great sages, is shared by men of dispassion, and it ever fructifies in those who have no doubt (about the existence of the Self).

26. *Beatitude of' God is near to the 6ustere souls, who are subdued in mind, who are free from desire and anger and who have known the Self.*

    Those who have withdrawn their minds from the sense-objects and subdued them, they do not wake up again from the state of bliss. Know that they are the persons who have become the Supreme Brahman itself, which is the mainspring of the knowers of Self. I shall tell you briefly, if you ask me how they became Brahman while remaining in the body (146-150).

27. *Shutting out all external sense - contacts, fixing the gaze between the eye-brows, and equalising the outer and inner breaths, moving within the nostrils;*
28. *The sage, who is fully intent on liberation, with his senses, mind, and intellect subdued, and* who is free from desire, fear and anger, is indeed ever free.

    He who shuts out the sense-objects by means of dispassion and Axes the mind within his body, and turning his gaze inwards on the ajnacakra ins1de the middle of the eye-brows, where all the three nadis, ida, pingala and madhyama meet, they turn the mind on the cidakasha after equalising the prana and apana. As when the river Ganges, after collecting the drain waters, meets the sea, it is not possible to separate each of them from the rest, so when the mind is merged in the akasha by the restraint of the prana, all thoughts of diverse desires cease by themselves, O Arjuna (151-155). Then is torn the cloth of mind, which displays the picture of world's existence, even as there is no reflection when the lake dries up. When the mind itself ceases, how can the ego-sense and the rest survive? Thus he experiences Brahman and becomes one with it, even while living.

29. *One attains to peace, having known me as the enioyer of the sacrifices and austerities, as the great Lord of all the world and as the friend of all beings.*

As I said before, some became Brahman in their very bodies; and they did this by following the path of yoga. After climbing the difficult cliff of spiritual discipline and crossing the sea of yogic practice, they transcended the worldly existence. After becoming sinless, they took the measure of the world and became truly of the nature of Brahman (156-160).

When Lord Krishna explained the purport of yogic practice, Arjuna, with his penetrating mind, was surprised. Anticipating what was in his mind, Lord Krishna asked Partha with a smile, "Are you satisfied with what I have told you?" Then Arjuna replied, "Lord you are foremost among those who discern the thoughts of others and have divined my intention. You already know what I was going to ask you; so kindly explain whatever you have said. This path of yoga is easy to follow like crossing the river by a ford instead of swimming (161-165). Though this yoga is attainable after a long time, it is easier than Sankhyayoga for weaklings like me. Therefore, recount it to me once more so that I can grasp it; even if it leads to repetition, explain it to me thoroughly". Then Lord Krishna said, "Has this path appealed to you so much? What does it matter? I shall be glad to repeat it, since you are so eager to hear it. O Arjuna, you listen well and practice what you hear. Then why should I hesitate to explain it to you?"

Already the Lord had the heart of a mother talking to her dear son. How can one fathom that strange affection (166-170)? One can call it the rain of tender sentiment or the unfoldment of wonderful love; how can I praise enough that compassionate gaze of Shri Hari? It was, as it were, filled with nectar or infatuated by the wine of love; and because of this it could not free itself from the affection of Arjuna. If I were to expatiate upon this affection, it will only end up with a lengthy discourse without fully describing that affection. Then of what use is this empty talk? Who can measure the Lord, who has not been able to take a measure of himself? From the trend of his talk it appeared to me that he was clearly infatuated. Under that influence he said, "Listen, my friend (171-175). O Arjuna, by whatever means I can enlighten your mind, I shall use those means to explain to you what this yoga i.e., what is its use and who are qualified to practice it. Whatever is proper in this regard, I shall tell you all. Listen with attention." With this statement what Lord Krishna said forms the subject matter of next chapter. Jnanadeva, disciple of Nivritti, will describe, in clear terms, Lord Krishna's instruction, how to attain this Yoga without giving up contact with the world. (176-180)

Chapter Sixth

Then Sanjaya said to king Dhritarashtra, "O King, kindly listen to the import of yoga, which Lord Krishna will impart to Arjuna. The Lord had arranged a feast of enlightenment, which I happened to attend as an uninvited guest. what luck! It is as if a thirsty man drank what he thought to be water and found, after tasting it, that it was nectar. By a happy chance, we have indirectly received the benefit of this doctrine of Brahman, to which Dritarashtra said, "I never asked you to tell me all this." When he said this, Sanjaya guessed that the king's mind was fully occupied with the fate of his sons(1-5). He smiled and said to himself, "This old man is accursed with infatuation, but the discourse has been excellent so far. But how can he appreciate it? How can one blind from the birth see the sawn?" He was afraid that his frank talk would attract his wrath. He hailed the conversation between the Lord and Arjuna and was transported with joy in his heart. Now, with a mind serene and full of joy, he will recount to the King respectfully what the Lord said. This is an endearing occasion in the Sixth Chapter of Gita like sweet nectar found in churning the sea of milk (6-10). This chapter is the essence of the meaning of the Gita, the farther shore of the sea of discriminating knowledge, and the open men of yogic treasures. It is the resting-place of Adimaya, before whom even the Vedas remain mute. This Gita is like a creeper, which provides shoots in the form of doctrines.

This sixth chapter will be told in a literary style, to which you should listen with rapt attention. I shall choose such beautiful diction of the local language (Marathi) that it will easily win, by its sweetness, a wager with nectar. Its melodious words will outshine musical notes and in their presence even fragrance will lose its sweetness, (11-15). The ears will put out tongues to savoir their taste and the senses will quarrel as to who should first enjoy them. though the words are naturally the object of ears, the tongue will stake its claim to taste their flavor and even the nose would like to enjoy their fragrance. What is more marvelous than this? The eye, comforted by its poetic style, will aver that it is a mine of beautiful forms. When the Lord utters a complete sentence, the mind moves out to embrace it with open arms. So the senses will enjoy this chapter according to their natures, but it will gratify them equally like the sun, which singly awakens the world (16-20). Know that the word possesses such extraordinary pervasive power that one who comprehends its meaning finds in it qualities of a philosopher's stone. I have served the juice of liberation in the dish of poetry and offered a feast for those who have renounced desire. It will be of avail only to those who, using the light of the self, will partake of it without the knowledge of the senses. The

listeners will have to make do without the ears and enjoy this discourse only with the aid of the mind. Removing the outer rind of words, they should go straight to the core of Brahman to enjoy its bliss (21-25). If you develop this lightness of touch, it will become fruitful; otherwise it will be the case of a mute talking to the deaf.

But it is not necessary to tell you who are qualified to hear it, as you are free from desire and have forsaken this world and the heaven for the sake of wisdom. Others, however, will not be able to appreciate the sweetness of this talk. Even as the crow does not know the moon, ordinary men will not understand this text. But as the same moon provides food to the chakora birds, so this text is a refuge to the wise and out of bounds to the ignorant. There is therefore, nothing more to be said about this subject (26-30). But I said it casually for which I crave your indulgence, O wise men.

Now I shall proceed to relate the conversation of the Lord with Arjuna. It is difficult to comprehend its meaning and to express it in words, but I hope to perceive it in the light of Shri Nivritti's compassion. if one achieves the power of super sensuous knowledge, one is ableto perceive even that which is beyond the reach of sight; for if the philosopher's stone comes to hand through good fortune, one can turn iron into gold which even the alchemist cannot achieve. So if one receives the compassion of his Guru, what can he not achieve? Jnanadeva says, "I have received this compassion in abundant measure (31-35). By vitue of that I shall give form to the formless and tender for the enjoyment of these ness that which is beyond their grasp. The blessed Lord in whom dwell the six great attributes, namely success; grace, munificence, wisdom, dispassion and prosperity, and who is the friend of all who are not attached to the world, said to Arjuna, "Give your attention to what I say".

The blessed Lord said:

1. *whoever performs his duty, without desire for its fruit, is a true renounce and Yogi, and not one who does not kindle the sacred fire and perform their other duties.*

Know that renunciation and Yoga are non-different. If you reflect upon them, you will find them one and the same. If you discard the apparent difference based on two different names, you will see that yoga is renunciation and not different from the standpoint of true knowledge (36-40). Just as the same person is known by two different names or the same place can be reached by two different paths, or the same water is filled in different pots, know the Yoga and renunciation differ in the same way. Arjuna, all is agreed that he alone is Yogi. Who performs actions but is not attached to their fruits. Just as the earth produces plants without any self-sense and does not expect the reward of fruits given by them, so by dint of his wisdom and according to his caste (41-45), he performs properly

actions which come his way without egoistic feeling and without hankering after their fruit. O Partha, believe me, he is a renounce as well as a great Yogi. Otherwise, whoever thinks of renouncing his lawful duties as leading to bondage and embarks upon other actions, becomes distracted in vain like a person who, out of obduracy, washes one stain only to soil himself again. Though the householder's lot has fallen upon him, he gives it up and takes on the burden of a enunciate (46-50). Therefore, when a person does not cross the boundary of action by performing sacrificial rites, the joy of yoga greets him of its own accord.

2. *That which they call renunciation, know that to be yoga, O son of Pandu, For no one who has not renounced volition can ever become a yogi*

   In this world many other scriptures have unfurled the banner of identity between renunciation and the Yoga. It is known from experience that the essence of Yoga is attained only when volition stops after it is renounced.

3. *For a sage who wishes to ascend yoga, action is said to be the means. But for one who has ascended Yoga, self-control is said to be the means.*

   He who wishes to climb the summit of Yoga should not spurn the easy steps of the way of action. After reaching the foot-hill through the practice of rules of restraint of senses and the mind (yama-niyama), he should take the foot-path of Yogic postures and climb the cliff of breath control (51-55). Then he reaches the precipice of self-control, where even the intellect slips and the Hathayogis too give up their wager of climbing it. But through the force of practice, he should fix his fingernails of dispassion on the edge of the precipice of self-control, where even the intellect slips and the Hathayogis too give up their wager of climbing it. But through the force of proactive, he should fix his fingernails of dispassion on the edge of the precipice of self-control. Thus, from the plateau of breath control, he takes the path of fixed attention (dharana) and climbs until he reaches the summit of meditation. When his spiritual practice reaches the goal of the union with Brahman, the ascent stops and his craving for action also ceases. Then the Yogi remains steady in the plane of Saamadhi in which there is no further journey and no recollection of past practice (56-60). Now I shall describe to you the characteristics of the Yogi, who has ascended yoga by these means and attained perfection.

4. *When one is not attached to actions, or to the objects of senses, and has renounced all volition, then he is said to have ascended Yoga.*

   When the Yogi remains in the linear chamber of wisdom, the sense objects do not enter the4 region of the senses. His mind does not become agitated by pleasure and pain and conscious of the sense-objects even if they are present before him. Even when his organs of actions become

active and undertake actions, his mind does not hanker after their fruit. Even if he remains awake in his body, he is as if dead to the world; know then without doubt that he has ascended Yoga (61-65). Then Arjuna said. "Lord, I am surprised to hear all this. Please tell me who gives him this capacity."

5. *He should raise himself up through the self (mind) and never debase himself; for verily mind alone is his friend, and mind alone is his enemy.*

   Lord Krishna said with a smile, "I am surprised at your talk. In this non-dual state, who can give what and to whom? When the embodied self sleeps on the bed of delusion in ignorance, he experiences the bad dream of life and death. When he suddenly wakes up, this dream vanishes and he apprehends the reality as nothings else but his own self. Therefore, O Arjuna, one brings about his own doom by identifying oneself falsely with his body (66-70).

6. *The mind is a friend to him who has controlled it by himself, but for one who has not mastered his mind, (This) very mind becomes hostile like a foe.*

   When a person renounces his ego through reflection, he becomes the existent Brahman and attains the supreme good. But he who regards the decked body as the Self becomes his own enemy like the silkworm. This is just like a luckless person, who feeling like one blind shuts his eyes, when prosperity is at the corner, or like a person who, out of delusion, looks upon himself to be lost and remains under this mistaken fantasy all the time. Otherwise the embodied self is Brahman itself, but he does not realize this truth. Do you think that one can really die of wounds inflicted in a dream? (71-75).It is like the parrot that sits on a pipe hung from a tree, and when it starts moving fast, he does not fly away but grips it out of fear. It then aimlessly turns its neck round, draws in its legs close to the heart and remains holding the pipe firmly in its beak. It falls into the trap under the mistaken notion that it is bound and its legs, although free, get entangled more and more in the pipe. Even if it were cut in the middle, it would not let go the pipe. When it is caught like this needlessly, can one say that somebody has bound it to the pipe? Likewise, he who increases his desires becomes his own enemy. Therefore, O friends, he alone is enlightened who does not falsely regard himself as bound (76-80).

7. *Of him who has subdued his mind and is tranquil, his higher (embodied) self becomes poised in heat and cold, pleasure and pain, as also in honour and dishonour.*
8. *He who is satisfied with wisdom and knowledge, who has steadily subdued his senses, who regards a clod, a stone and a gold bar the same, that yogi is said to be absorbed in yoga.*

To him who has subdued his mind and stilled his desires, the Supreme Self is not distant as to others. As with the separation of baser metal gold becomes pure, so in the absence of desire the embodied self becomes one with Brahman. When the pot is destroyed, the space therein does not have to go to another place to merge with the akasha, so when the ego is destroyed root and branch, the embodied self remains in his pristine all-pervasive form. Then the sensations of cold and heat or thoughts of pleasure and pain or words of praise and blame do not affect him (81-85). Wherever the sun moves, all the paths become lighted; so he regards all things which he sees as non-different from him. When the clouds send showers, they do not prick the sea; likewise the good and evil deeds do not affect the yogi. When he reflects on wordly knowledge, he realizes its inadequacy, and when he seeks wisdom, he apprehends that he himself is that.

Then he begins to ponder over whether he is all-pervasive or limited; but all such speculation stops when dualistic thought ceases, When a person; conquering his senses even while in the body, has measured up to the level of the supreme self (86-90) and does not entertain such distinctions as small and great, in short, when he has subdued his senses, he becomes endowed with yoga. He treats equally the Meru Mountain of pure gold and clod of earth and is so indifferent to the world that he regards a precious jewel of greater worth than the earth as nothing does better than a stone.

9. *He excels who has equal consideration for well wishers, friends, foes and the neutral, for mediators, for hateful men and relations, and for good men and sinners too.*

Then how will he believe in the strange distinction between an ally and an enemy, an indifferent person and a friend? When he realizes that he is one with the world, then who is whose brother and who is whose enemy (91-95)? How can he view anything as petty or grand? How cans the touch of the philosopher's stone produce different qualities of gold? Just as it will produce only pure gold, his intellect will find unity in animate and inanimate things.

Even as different ornaments are fashioned out of gold, all worldly things having different shapes have emerged from Brahman. When this full knowledge is attained by him, he is not deceived by the diversity of creation. Just as a close look shows that cloth is made of yarn, he perceives nothing but Brahman in this world (96-100). He attains equanimity when he reaches this conviction on the basis of experience, which is true knowledge. He is a prince among holy men whose sight gives satisfaction and whose company grants Brahmahood even to the deluded. His words enliven religion, his mere glance produces miraculous

powers, and heavenly pleasures etc. are mere toys, which he can gift away. A person who remembers him by chance receives this capability from him. In short, to praise and honour him confers great benefit.

10. *The yogi should meditate constantly remaining alone in solitude, controlling his mind and body, and having no desires and possessions.*

When the sun of non-duaalism rises in him never to set again, he remains whole in his pristine nature (101-105). He is non-dual who discrimiinates in this way, and is without worldly possessions. O Partha. Thus Lord Krishna described with greater consideration than to himself the special characteristics of an enlightened person. The Lord said : He is the reacher of the enlightened - nay the light in their eyes, the Lord whose will has created this world. The fine iterary garment of the Vedas spun in the mart of the sacred syllable Om could not sufficiently cover his glory. His physical lustre sustains the activities of the sun and the moon; how then can the world function without this support? (106-110). When even the heavens seem insignificant when his name is uttered, how can you grasp his attributes one and all? Enough of this praise! I do not know howto descirbe his characteristics, but felt like telling them to you. (Shri Jnanadeva says) : the Lord thought that if he were to disclose the knowledge of self which destroys the notion of duality, he would miss the affection of his dear Arjuna. He, therefore, spoke screening that knowledge from Arjunaa, and kept his mind seperate in order to enjoy their mutual friendship. He said to himself, let not those who have almost reached the state of union with God and pining for liberation cast an evileye on his affection (111-115). If he were to lose his ego-sense and become myself, then what shall I do alone without his company? Then who will be there, by seeing whom I can cool my eyes, whom i can talk to freely and hug closely? If I were to attain oneness with Arjuna, whome can I tell my intimate thoughts which I cannot hold in my mind. With an aching heart, therefore, the Lord of the world described to Arjuna the enlightened man and avoided the communion of their minds.

This may seem somewhat odd, but you must remember that Arjuna was the very embodiment of the happiness of Lord Krishna (116-120). When a woman thought to be barren gives birth to a child late in her life, she becomes the very embodiment of affection and dances around it. Similar was the state of Lord Krishna. I would not have mentioned this, but for the fact that I saw his excessive affection for Arjuna. How wonderful! How marvellous! The instruction was as memorable as the occasion. Lord Krishna danced round Arjuna like a marionette. What can one say of a fondness which is bashful, of a hobby which is tiresome and a crazy which is not infatuating? What I mean to convey in this is that Arjuna is the abode of Lord's friendship, the very mirror of his mind filled with happiness (121-125). So blessed was Arjuna, pure and holy, the perfect soil for the

seed of devotion, that he became the fit recipient of the Lord's grace. Partha was the presiding deity of friendship, which is anterior to the ninth form of devotion, namely self-surrender to God. Instead of praising the Master, I have praised in his presence the qualities of his pal Arjuna, so dear to Krishna. You see, does not the faithful wife who serves her husband with devotion and is also respected by him, receive more praise than him? Thererfore, I thought it better to praise Arjuna specially because he became the sole beneficiary of good fortune in the three worlds (126-130). Beacause ofhis fondness for Arjuna, the formless God assumed form and though self-suffcient the longed for the company of Arjuna.

Then the hearers said: "How lucky we are! What superb diiction! Its elegance exceeds even the melody of seven notes of music". Is it not amazing that this diction in the local language should leave on the mind an impress of the seven sentiments (*rasas*)? The knowledge embodied in it shines like the moonlight and the import of the verses pleases like the night-blooming lotuses. It made even the saintly hearers full of desire so that they became enrapt with inner bliss and began to reel (131-135). Percelving their state of mind, Jnandeva, thedisciple of Nivritti, said, "Please listen. The sun in the form of Lord Krishna shed light on the Pandvas. Devaki bore him in her womb, Yashoda reared him with great effort, but ultimately he went to the aid of the Pandavas. Arjuna was so fortunate that he did not have even to serve him for long.Then the hearers said, "Enough of this digression. Continue the story." Then Jnandeva continued: Arjuna, thereafter, accosted Lord Krishna thus: "O Lord, I do not possess these charachtristics, but I could attain that capabiliity through your instruction (136-140). If you dhoe mr yhid kidness, I shall even attain union with Brahman. No matter what you tell me, I shall gladly practise it. Even though I have not fully comprehended your talk, I immensely value it and shall be thrilled to attain that greatness. Lord, will you extend me this favour and make me fit for it?" The Lord smiled and said, "Yes, I will do that for you." Until one attains bliss, one experiences sorrow now and then, but after its attainment, what else would he want? Moreover, a servant of God can easily become one with Brahman. See how fortune has brought abundant harvest to Arjuna (141-145).

He, whom Indra and other gods could not attain evern after thousand births, has become amenable to Arjuna that he wil not deny him anything. When Arjuna said that he would like to become one with Brahman, the Lord heard it all. He thought to himself. "Since Arjuna is loging to become Brahman, dispassion has entered his understanding. Just as a treenot fully grown bends with a profusion of blooms in speing, so Arjuna is sure to blossom into the state of oneness with Brahman. Lord Krishna was convinved that Arjuna had become so full of dispassion that he would attain before long union with Brahman (146-150). He said to himself, "Whatever he does now he will reap its fruit. If I instruct him in the practice

of Yoga, it will not go waste." With this tought, Lord Krishna said on that occasion: Arjuna, listen very carefully to this royal path. In this path, the tree of activity is laden with thousand fruits of inactivity. Lord Shiva is still a pilgrim treading this path. Soome yogis, taking the bypath, they came to this straight path of knowledge and made great strides therein (151-155).

The great sages also traversed this path and became adepts (siddhas) and becoming enlightened they attained eminence. Those who tread this path, forget hunger and thirst, and do not know when the day ends and the night comes and vice versa. Wherever they step, they find an open mine of salvation, and even if they go off the path, they gain happiness in heaven. By taking the path of activity, they reach the path of inaction and continue their steady progress on this path. When they reach the goal, they come to realize that they are the goal. But why should I tell you all this? You will come to know it by and by (156-160). Then Partha said, "O Lord, when will you explain this yoga to me and rescue me from this sea of anxiety in which I am plunged." The Lord replied : Why are you talking so impatiently? I was on the point of explaning it to you when you asked me.

11. *He should set pu in a clean place a firm seat for himself, neither too high nor too low, made of cloth, deer skin and kusha grass, one below the other.*

I shall tell you this yoga in detail, but it becomes fruitful with practice. Firstly, you must choose a proper spot for practice. That spot should be so pleasant that no one should think of leaving it and that its very sight should redouble dispassion. It must have been occupied by saints before, so that it should make you happy, enthused and firm in your vow (161-165). The place should be so pleasant that one should be able to practise yoga with ease and gain spiritual experience there. Even, if a sceptic, O Partha, passes by that place, he should feel like doing penance at that spot. The place should be such the even if a person arrived there by chance, he should forget the purpose for which he had undertaken the journey. It should be able to detain a person who wishes to leave, to make a wanderer remain there and promote dispassion. Even if a voluptuous prince were to see that spot, he should feel instantly that he should renounce his kingdom and stay there in seclusion (166-170).

That spot should be so pleasant and pure that its sanctity should be apparent to anyone. It must be further borne in mind that it should have been inhabited by spiritual aspirants and not frequented by common people. It should have dense fruit-bearing trees, having roots as sweet as nectar. It should also have pure water here and there even outside tha rainy season, especially of natural springs, easy of access. There should be a mild sun and a cool breeze, (171-175) not much of noise and no

movement of animals. though there may be a few parrots and bees. It may have a few ducks, some swans and two or three crows and it does not matter if a cuckoo visits the place somtime or the other. If a few peacocks come there not always but occasionally, we will not raise any objection to it.

O Arjuna, the aspirant should find a spot of this description and locate therein a secret cave of Shiva Temple. He should choose whichever he finds congential, and remain seated there in a secluded place (176-180). After seeing whether he can keep his mind steady there, he should seldct a suitable seat there. Then he should place one below the other a clean cloth, a deer skin and a mat of kusha gras. The kusha grasses must be soft and similar and they should be so joined that they keep together. If the seat is too high, the body will feel shaky and if it is too low, it will be affected by the defects of the ground (such as dampness, insects etc.). It should therefore, be placed at a reasonable height and the seat should be as described above (181-185).

12. *Seated there in that seat, making his mind one-pointed, and controlling the functions of his mind and senses, he should practise meditation for the purification of the mind.*

Then he should concentrate his mind after remembering the Guru. When he remembers the Guru with reverence, his mind becomes full of sattba quality and his egoism loses its strength. He will then be oblibious to the sense-objects, his senses wil lose their vigour, and the mind will settle down in the heart. He should remain on that spot until the mind becomes united with the heart, and when he becomes conscious of it, he should take theseat. Then when he holds his body erect and controls his breath, he gains superb experience (186-190). When he becomes seated and his activity ceases, he easily achieves concentration and becomes proficient in yoga.

I shall now describe to you an excellent Mudra. first he should sit folding the legs on the corresponding thighs placing the left leg obliquely over the other leg. Then pressing firmly the right heel against the sphincter of the anus, and keeping it on the ground, he should press it against the pubic bone so that the right heel perches on the left heel. Of the space of four fingers between the anus and the male organ he should leave the space of one and half fingers above and below (191-195) and press by the upper part of the heel the middle space one finger wide. Then balancing the body, as if lifting the lower part of the spinal column, he should keep the two ankles straight. Now the whole body, O Partha, remains steady on the two heels, Arjuna, this is the characteristic of the mudra known as mulabandha, also known as vajrasana, the diamand posture. When he

achieves this mudra, the inbreath, with its downward passage blocked, begins to move backwards (196-200).

13. *Holding the body, head and neck erect and steady without motion, he should fix his gaze on the tip of his nose, without looking around.*

    Then he should place both his palms on the left knee, so that the shoulder blades are raised up. Since the shoulders are lifted up, the head becomes buried (in the chest) and the eye-lashes begin to close. The upper eye-lash remains steady and the lower one spreads out so that the eyes look half-closed. In this way, the vision remains inwards and even if it tries to go out, it remaains confined to the region of thenose-tip. Thus this half-closed sight remains centered inwards and unable, to go outwards, rests on the nose-tip (201-205). Then all desire to look in all directions or to wait until the activity of vaious form to impinge on the sight naturally ceases. Thereafter the adam's apple is pushed back and the chin is tightly set against the jugular notch pressing against the chest. When the adam's apple disappears from sight, the bandha so formed, O Arjuna, is known as Jalandhara (Chin-Lock). Then the navel comes up, the belly becomes deflated and inside the diaphragm rises up. This bandha which is formed above the lowest nerve centre and below the nerve-centre ate the neval is known as Udiyana. When the yoga proceeds in this manner in respect of the parts of the body, then it reduces the grip of the mental functions.

14. *Then with a serene mind, and becoming fearless and firm in the vow of chastity, the yogi should control his mind, thinking of ME and remain devoted to Me.*

    Then the imagination subsides, activity becomes calm, and the functions of the body and the mind stand still. Then thoughts of hunger and sleep do not bother him and he does not even remember them. The in-beath which was confined by the anal construction (mulabandha) moves backwards and being excited and puffy, it grows in its place of confinement and bangs at the naval centre (manipura). Then this expanded in breath churns the belly from all sides and removes the impurities collected theirin from childhood. But instead of rolling at the bottom, it enters the belly and destroys the bile and phlegm therein. It overturns the seven humours without leaving a trace, pulversies the rolls of fat and draws out the marrow of the bones. It calms the nerves and making the limbs loose, frightens the spiritual aspirant, but he should not funk. It gives rise to illness, but cures it also instantaneously and mixes together the liquid (bile, phlegm etc.) and solid (flesh, marrow etc.) parts of the body (216-120). O Arjuna, next the heat nererated by the posture wakes up the serpent power known as Kundalini like a young serrpent bathed in red pigment (kumkuma) resting twisted round itself, this small serpent power, the kundalini, is asleep with mouth downwards in three and a half coils.

She is like a streak of lightening or a fold of flame, or a polished band of pure gold.

This kundalini sitting crowded at the naval centre wakes up, when she gets pushed up by the annal contraction (mulabandh) (221-225). Now as though a star has fallen or the sun's seat has broken loose or the seed of lustre, which has been planted, has produced a sprout, so this serpent power is seen to uncoil herself and stand up relaxing her body on the naval centre. She has been hungry for long, and by reason of her being woken up, she opens her mouth wide and forcefully raises it up. Arjuna, then she embraces the in-breath collected under the lotus of the heart, and begins to bite the upper and lower flesh (226-230). She easily swallows the flesh wherever she can find it, and then she takes one or two mouthfuls of the heart's flesh also. Then she searches for the soles of the feet and palms of hands, and piercing their upper parts she shakes up all the limbs and joints. Thereafter without leaving her place, she draws out the core of the finger-nails, and cleansing the skin, clings to the skeleton. She clean up the bones and scrapes the fibres of muscles, so tht the grwoth of the hair-roots of the body begin to wither. Then she quenches her thirst by lapping up the seven humours, and makes the body completely dried up all over (231-235). Then she draws in forcibly the out-breath, flowing outwards from the nostrils to a distance of twelve fingers. She thereafter pulls up the in-breath and pulls down the out-breath, and when they meet, only the sheaths of nerve-centres remain. Both the breaths would have mingled at that time; but the Kundalini, being uneasy for a moment, asks them to keep away. O Arjuna, this serpent power eats up all the solid stuff in the body, and leaves nothing of the watery parts also. When she eats these solid and liquid parts of the body, she becomes satisfied and remains calm in the spinal cord (236-240).

In this state of satiation, the venom she turns in nectar and sustains life. The fiery venom which comes out nectar and sustains life. The fiery venom which comes out cools internally the body, which regains once again the strength which it had lost. The nervous flow stops and the nine life-breaths except prana cease and then the body too loses its functions. Then the breaths flowing through the left and right nostrils mingle, the knots of the three lower nerve-centres become loose, and the six nerve-centres become disjoined. The sun and moon currents of breath, which flow through the nostrils, are so subtle that they are not felt on the fibre held before them (241-245). The sparkle the intellect then ceases and the frangrance in the nose, along with the serpent power, entres the spinal cord. The cask of moon-nectar situated above tilts on one side, and the nectar begins to flow into the mouth of the Kundalini. The nectar fills her and then spreads to the whole body and is soaked therein by the aid of the prana. As wax, placed in a red-hot mould melts and fills it up, so the body looks as if lustre, covered by skin, has descended in the human form

(246-250). As the sun, hidden behind the cloak of a cloud, comes out in full splendour when the cloud is scattered, so the scales of skin, which seemed dry, fall off like husk, and then the body assumes a complexion so comely as though it is fashined out of crystal or has sprouted from a gem, or dressed up with the red hue of the evening sky, of it is the figure taken on by the inner light. Then his body looks as if it is filled with red pigment and nectar or it appears as though it is peace incarnate (251-255). It is like a picture of delight, or a form of great happiness, or a full-grown bush of contentment, or a bud of gold-flowered champak (michelia Champaca) or a bust of nectar or an orchared laden with tender leaves, or like the moon embellished with the autumnal dew, or like a statue made of lustre sitting on a seat, when the Kundalini drinks the moon elixir. Then even Death-god stands in awe of that figure.

Then old age recedes, youthfulness takes a leap backwards, and the childhood which had long past returns (256-260). Even though he looks so young, he performs great feats and his courage is equally great and unexcelled. Even as sparkling buds come out from the leaves of the golden tree, new lustrous finger-nails come out of his body. He also gets new teeth, but they are so small, that they look like two rows of pearls set in the mouth. Like the broken bits of atom-sized rubies, tips of hair grow on his whole body. The palms of the hands and the soles of the feet become red like red lotuses and how can one describe his clear eyes (261-265)? Just as the shell cannot contain the pearl when it swells and becomes oversize, and its seam gives way and begins to open, so the sight, instead of being held within the eye-lashes, goes out far and wide and pervades the whole heaven. O Arjuna, the body takes on a golden colour but possesses the lightness of wind, having lost the liquid and solid parts of matter.

Then the yogi can see beyond the seas, hear the sounds of heaven, and comprehend the desire of an ant. He can ride on the wind, walk on water without wetting his feet, and in this way he acquires many miraculous powers (266-270). Holding the hand of prana and climbing the steps in the region of hearts, the Kundalini reaches the heart centre through the spinal cord. This Kundalini is the mother of the world, who illumine the self and gives shade to the sprouted seed of the universe. It is the embodiment of the formless Brahman, the cask of Lord Shiva, the main spring of the sacred syllable Om. When this outhful Kundalini enters the heart-centre, she begins to utter unbeaten sounds. The sounds fall slightly on the ears of intelligence, which is very close to the serpent power (271-275). In the cubicle from which these sounds emanate, they manifest themselves as figures as if drawn on the lines of Om. This can be known only by imagination, but where to find one who possess it? No one knows that rumbling foes on in the region of the heart. I forgot to mention, O Arjuna, that so long as prana remains, these subtle sounds are produced in the

region of the heart. When the latter resounds with these sounds resembling the rumbling of clouds, then the window to the Brahmarudhra redily opens. There is another great region resembling the calyx of a lotus, in which the self resides aloft (276-280). The supreme Kundalini then enters this abode of the self and offers him the victuals of her lustre. She indeed offers intelligence as a vegetable dish to him and does it in such a way as to leave no trace of dualism. Then the Kundalini gives up her fiery complexion and reamins in the gaseous state. You might as well ask how she looks at that time. She dissolves herself in this gaseous form and keeps aside her garment of golden stripes. Even as the light is extinguished by the touch of the wind, or the lightning flashes and disappars in the sky (281-285), so when the Kundalinin enters the lotus of the heart centre, she looks like a gold-chain or like water flowing from a spring of light. Then all of a sudden she subsides into the calyx of the heart, and her form merges into the formless Shakti. Although she is called Shakti, she is still in the form of gas (Vayu). At that time one is not aware of the Nada, or the Bindu or of the Kalajyoti. Then the conquest of mind, the support of breath-control and resort to meditation do not survive, and though and its absence come to a stop. So she is the crucible in which the gross elements crubmle (286-290). That the body should be swallowed by the body is the Natha creed and and its purport is disclosed here by Lord Krishna, the incarnation of Vishnu. Untying the bundle of that purport and unfolding the truth, I have presented it before you, who are its clients.

15. *By applying himself thus constantly the self-controlled Yogi attains peace consisting of infnite bliss, that abides in Me.*

Arjuna, when the Shakti loses her power, the body becomes bereft of form and becomes invisible to the world. But then the body looks like a banana tree which, shedding its outer skin, stands bare in its core or like the sky which has put forth limbs (291-295). When the body assumes this form, the yogi is called the sky-rover. When he attains to his state, his body works wonders in the world. When he walkes leaving a trail behind him, then the eight miraculous powers wait upon him at every step. But of what avail are these powers to us? O Arjuna, the elements of earth, water and fire get dissolved in the body. the earth is dissolved by water, water by fire, and the wind dissolves the fire in the heart. Then the wind alone remains, but in the form of the body; and that too becomes absorbed in the sky of the Brahmarandhra (296-300). She retains her shakti form until she becomes one with Brahman.

Now she is not known as Kundalini, but takes on the name 'aerial' (maruta). Then leaving the jalandhara bandha and breaking open the end of the sushumna nadi she enters the cidakasha of Brahmarandhra. Placing her foot on the back of Omkara, she then crosses the second

stage of speech known as pashyanti. Then she pierces the half crescent matra of Om and enters the cidakasha, as the river enters the sea. Making herself steady in the Brahmarandhra with the conviction that 'I am Brahman there. then with the destruction of the veil of the five great elements results the union of Shiva and Shakti. And she along with the cidakasha becomes merged in the blilss of Brahman, just as the sea water being transformed into clouds (by the process of enaporation) and the clouds pouring down into the rivers, ultimately rejoin the sea, in the same way the embodied self, by means of the human body, enters the abode of Brahman and becomes united with it.

At this stage all doubt or discussion whether there is duality or unity comes to an end. When a person experiences this state in which the cidakasha becomes merged in akasha, he becomes one with it (306-310). This state cannot possibly be experessed in words so that it can be explained in conversation. O Arjuna, even Vaikhai, the fourth form of speech which boasts of its power of expressing a thought remains mute in this case. Even the makara, (the third syllable of Om) finds it difficult to enter the region behind the eyebrows. Similarly, the vital breath prana experiences difficult to enter the region behind the eyebrows. Similarly, the vital breath prana experiences difficulty in entering the cidaksha. When it gets merged in the cidakash, the expressive power of words comes to an end, and then even the akasha becomes attenuated, so that one finds it difficult to trace it in thedeep waters of the unmanifest state of the Absolute. Of what avail are words then? (311-315). This state cannot be certainly brought within the scope of words or of hearing: this is the absolute truth. If fortune favours a person and he cares to experience it, he becomes one with it. Then nothing remains to be known, O archer, and any further talk about it would be fruitless. It is a state from which words turn back, in which desire ends and which is beyond paleof thought. This is the beautiful state of mental obsorbtion, the youthful state of samadhi in which the yogi becomes one with Brahman.It is beginningless and unfathmable (316-320). It is the orgin of the universe, the fruit of the Yoga-tree and the very sentience of bliss. It is that in which the state of emancipation, all beginning and end get merged. This Brahman is the orgin of the five great elements, the light of light, in short, o partha, it is my own essence. When the non-believers persecuted the band of my devotees, I became incartnate and assumed the beautiful human form with four arms. In order to attain the indescribable bliss of this form men strove creaselessly and became full of bliss (321-325). Those who practised this method of Yoga described by me became purified and achieved a capability equal to mine. There bodies appear brilliant, as if they are fashioned out of the essence of the supreme spirit, cast in the mould of the human form. Once such experience illumines the mind, the entire world of appearance vanishes.

Then Arjuna said, "O Lord, what you say is all true; by following the path preached by you, one clearly goes to the abode of Brahman. I have now come to realize from your talk that those who practise this Yogaassiduously, surely attain to Brahman (326-330). This realisation has dawned on me after hearing you. Then how can one who has actually experienced it not become one with it? There is nothing strange about it, but please listen for a moment to what I have to say. The Yoga described by you certainly appeals to my mind; but I may not be able to practise it for want of competence. I shall fain followthat path, if I could pursure it to the end with all the strenght at my command. But if you feel that this Yoga is beyond my capacity then tell me a path which is well within my limited capacity (331-335). With this thought uppermost in my mind, I asked you about this. I have listened carefully to the Yoga which you have preached. But is it possible for anyone to practise it or only one with requisite capacity can follow it?

Then Shri krishna replied, O Arjuna, what a question to ask! The practice of this Yoga conduces to liberation. But even in the case of any ordinary work, can one perform it without capacity on his part? One can assess the capacity of a person only from the suceess of his undertaking. Only if there is such ability, the work undertaken is completed (336-340). But this capacity is not a thing which can be had merely because it is desired. Tell me, is there a mine of ability from which you can extract it? Only a person who performs his prescribed duty with disinterestedness can attain this capacity, is it not so? You yourself could acquire this capacity by following this device. In this way Shri Krishna cleared the doubt of Arjuna. He further said, O Partha, there is, however, one rule about this capacity that it cannot be attained by one who does not perform his prescribed duty

16. *Yoga is not for him who eats too much, nor for him who eats too little, nor for him who indulges in too much sleep and surely not for him who keeps awake (too long).*

One whoo is a slave to his palate or given to sleep is not considered qualified for the study of Yoga, (341-345) nor he who starves himself by suppressing his hunger and thirst nor one who deprives himself of sleep. If a person begaves thus through obstinacy,even his body does not remain under his control; then how can he succeed in Yoga? Therefore, one should avoid excessive enjoyment of sense-objects; one should neither spurn it nor restrain one's natural impulses.

17. *He who is moderate in eathing and movement, in exertion and in work, in sleep and wakefulness, to him accrues yoga which destroys sorrow.*

A person should eat to live, and so he should eat w3holesome food in moderation. Whatever work he unndertakes, he should also do it in

moderation. He should be moderate in his speech and in walks and go to sleep at a fixed hour (346-350). If he has to keep awake, he should do so for a limited period. By means of such a regulated life, he is able to maiantain the seven primary fluids of the body in due prportions. If senses are kept satisfied by providing then their sense-objects in a regular way, the mind also remains contented.

18. *When his mind well controlled rest in self alone, he becomes indifferent to all enjoyments; then he is said to be yukta i.e. absorbed in yoga.*

When the external senses are so regulated, the internal organ becomes full of happiness. In this way the Yogi attains to Yoga without any efort. Just as when fortune smiles at a person, prosperity walks to his door-step without much effort on his part, in the same way when one practises Yoga with ardour, one attains self-realisation (352-355). Therefore, O Arjuna, the fortunate person who has mastered the art of self-restraint adorns the throne of emancipation.

19. *Like a lamp kept in a windless place that flickers not, this metaphor is thought of in the case of the mind of the Yogi who has controlled it by practising meditation on the self.*

When regulated food is combined with the practice of Yoga, their happy conjnction becomes like Prayaga, the confluence of three rivers. He whose mind remains steady in that state till the end like a monk who remains permanently at a holy place, he is entitled to be called a Yogi. Now remember that his mind is then comparable to a lamp kept in a windless place. Now reading your mind, I shall do nsome plain speaking, which you should bear in mind. you wish for success in the practice of Yoga, but you are not giving as much attention to it as you ought. Are you affraid that this practice of Yoga is difficults to undertake (356-360)? But, O Arjuna, if you entertain such a fear in your mind, know that these cunning senses are ever creating goblins out of simple things to frighten you. O arjuna, though medicine postpones death and increases longevity, does not the palate regard it as an enemy? Even so the senses always find such actions troublesome as conduce to the supreme good. Otherwise, is thereany mehtod as simple as Yoga?

20. *That in which his mind funds peace, restrained by the practice of Yoga and in which he, seeing the self by the mind, rejoices in the self,*
21. *that in which he experiences absolute bliss, which can be grasped by the intellect, but is beyond the senses and in which, being established, he swerves not, in truth, from it,*

If this Yoga is practiced by adopting a steady posture, then it will bring about restraint of the senses. Onely when the senses become restrained

through the practice of Yoga, the mind, of its own accord, realizes the self (361-365). When the mind turns away from the sense-objects and becomes introspective, it perceives the self and identifies itself with the self. Thereafter it experiences the kingdom of permanent bliss and become one with the self. Then themind abides in the self beyond which there is nothing which is beyond the senses.

22. *That by gaining which he thinks no greater gain beyond it and in which being established, he is not shaken by sorrow, however great,*

    Then even if mountains of misery bigger than the Meru come down crashing upon him, his mind is not shaken. nor does his mind, which is reposing in the supreme bliss, become agitated, even if his body is cut with a weapon or falls into fire (365-370). When the mind is absorbed in the bliss of self, it soes not remain conscious of the body, and having attained this indescribable bliss, forgets all things which affect the body.

23. *That one should know by the name Yoga, which is detachment from the bond of pain. That Yoga should be practiced with conviction and with undespairing mind.*

    When the mind has savoured of this bliss of self, it forgets all desires and withdraws itself from the worldly life. this bliss is the grace of Yoga, the kingdom of contentment and the experience of wisdom. This bliss is realised directly through the practice of yoga and one who realizes it becomes one with it.

24. *Abandoning without exception all desires born of volition, and restraining on everyside all the senses by the mind alone.*

    Neverthless, O Arjuna, this yoga is a simple path in one way. This yoga is easy to attain, if one (destroys desire) and so makes volition mourn the death of its child (371-375). When volition realizes that with the elimination of the sense-objects the activities of the senses are completely brought under control,it will die of a broken heart. When dispassion fills every pore of the body and mind, then volition stops functioning and the intellect dwells happily in the mansion of fortitude.

25. *gradually he should cease from action by means of his intellect sustained by steadiness; aand fixing the mind on the self, he should think of nothing else.*
26. *from wherever the mind wanders, fickle and unsteady, by restraining it thereform, he should bring it under his control.*

    If the intellect has the strong support of fortitude, it brings themind gradually on the path of self-realisation and establishes it in the temple of

the supreme self. If this cannot be done, then i shall tell you another easy way, please listen. we should first make a rule and resolve not to deviate from it (376-380). if the mind becomes steady by means of this rule, then it has served its purpose. if this does not happen, the mind should be left to itself. Wherever then this uncontrolled mind wanders, it should be arrested from there and brought back. in this way, it will gradually become steady of its own accord.

27. *Supreme bliss come to the Yogi whose mind is at peace, whose passion has subsided and who is stainless and has become one with Brahman.*

When the mind remains steady for a long time, it gets near the Self and when it perceives the true self, becomes one with it. then the duality mjerges into unity, and all the three worlds become radiant in the light of this unity. As when the clouds scatter, there remains behind the all-prevading sky (381-385), so when the mind becomes merged in the self, the whole world becomes permeaated by the radiant llight of the self. By this way, it is possible to achieve self-realisation without much effort.

28. *Constantly applying his mind thus, theYogi who is free from stain, enjoys with ease the infunite bliss of contact with Brahman.*

In this way, several persons have, by adopting this method of yoga and renouncing desire, attained self-realisation and oneness with Brahman. Just as salt having come into contact with water cannot be separated from it, such is the state achieved by the embodied self when he becomes one with Brahman. Then he feels as if the world is the temple of unity and the people are celebrating the festival of lights. In this manner, one should turn one's face in the reverse direction towards one's original state (the self). But if you find this also difficult, then please listen; I shall tell you another way (386-390).

29. *Absorbed in meditation, he sees the self in all beings and all beings in the self and sees the same everywhere.*
30. *He who sees me everywhere and sees all beings in Me - I am not lost to him nor is he lost to Me.*

Entertain no doubt about the fact that I dwell in all bodies and that all beings also live in me. You must grasp the notion that this world and all the beings therein are mutually connected. So my devotee, O Arjuna, sees me in all creatures with the feeling of unity and worships me with equanimity. He sees me alike in all beings without distinction, although these seem many and different. Then it become needles to say that he and myself are one (391-395). Just as the lamp and its light are one, so he exists in me and I exist in him. Just as there is fluidity in water or vacuity in the sky, such a yogi abides in a form like mine.

31. *He who worships me in all beings established in unity, in whatever condition he lives, that Yogi dwells in Me.*

He sees me everywhere with the feeling of unity like yarn in cloth. Just as the ornaments of different forms are made of gold only, he has a steady conviction that all things in this world are one. Or just as although the leaves are different they belong to a sintgle tree, in the same way when the sun of non-dualism dawns, the night of ignorance vanishes (396-400). How then can the Yogi dwelling in a body made up of the five elements remain confined in it? For he has attained to equality with me because of his experience of the Self. When he has realised my all-perasive nature through his experience, he naturally becomes all pervading without my saying so. Even though he dwells in the body, he does not feel any attachment towards it. How can this thing be made clear though the medium of words?

32. *He who, in comparison with himself, O Arjuna, sees alike (as his own) the happiness or sorrow of every being is deemed the best yogi.*

This much should suffice in thematter. he ever views the universe, both movable as well as immovable, as himself and does not make any distinction between emotions such as pleasure and pain, or between actions as good and bad (401-405). He regards all odd and even feeling and multiform things as his limbs form one body. In short, he experiences that he is all the three worlds and although he is regarded by the people according to their popular usage as passessing a body, he is still of thevery form of Brahman because of his experience. Therefore, O Arjuna, you should develop in your self equanimity, by which you will view the entire universe as yourself. For this reason, I have been stressing time and again that there is not better thing in this world than equanimity (406-410).

Arjuna said:

33. *This yoga, which you have declared as equanimity, O killer of Madhu (Krishna), I do not see how it can remain stable owing to out fitfulness.*
34. *for the mind is fickle, O krishna, impetuous, strong and stubborn; I think its control to be as dificult as that of the wind.*

Thereupon Arjuna said, "O lord, you have disclosed to me the path of Yoga out ofafffection, but owing to the fickle nature of the mind it will not endure. If we ponder over this mind, how it is and of what kind, we are unable to fathom its nature. Even the three worlds are not sufficient for it to waqnder in. Could a monkey go into samadhi or the tornado ever become tranquil? This mind torment the intellect, makes determination unsteady and gives the slip to courage. it confounds right thought, makes

contentment dance round it and makes a person, though sitting, wander in all directions (411-415). If it is curbed, it runs riot, but if it is restrained, it comes to out aid. How can such a mind give up its fickle nature ? Therefore, it is not possible to make the mind steady and acquire equanimity.

The blessed Lord said:

35. *With out doubt, O mighty-armed Arjuna, the mind is fickle and hard to curb. Yet, O son of Kunti, by constant practice it is held in check.*

Thereupon the blessed Lord said, O Arjuna, what you say is indeed true. The mind is by nature fickle. But it is possible to make it steady after sometime, if one takes recourse to dispassion and directs the mind to the path of yoga. It is the quality of the mind that if it takes a liking for a thing, it forms an attachment ot it. You should, therefore, create a liking in it for the experience of self (416-420).

36. *I agree that yoga is hard to achieve by a person who has not subdued hismind. But this can be achieved by the right means by a self-controlled person who makes the effort.*

I concede that those who are not indiferent to the world and do not practise yoga cannot possibly control the mind. But if we do not proceed along the path of self-control, vever enen remember what dispassion is, but keep on pluning in the waters of sense-objects and do not apply the cane of self-restraint, how can you make the mind still? Therefore, adopt the means by which you can restrain the mind and then let us see how the mind does not become steady. Do you think that the path of Yoga which has been laid down is all empty talk? The most that you can say is that you are unable to practise yoga (421-425). if you acquire the strength of Yogic discipline, how can the mind remain fickle? Will you not be able to bring with the aid of Yoga thegreat principle (mahat) and others under your thumb? " Then Arjuna said, "O God, what you say is true. The strength of the mind is feeble before the power of Yoga. So far I had not known what this Yoga is and how one can practise it. I, therefore, thought that it is difficult to control the mind. It is only now, for the first time, in my life, that I have come to know, through your grace, O supreme person, what Yoga means.

Arjuna said:

37. *(If) he who is unrestrained but has faith, with his mind wandering from yoga, fails to achieve perfection in yoga, what state does he reach, O Krishna?*

38. *Fallen from both, does be not perish like a rent cloud, lacking firm support, O mighty armed krishna, bewildered in the path of Brahman?*
39. *Pray, dispel fully this doubt of mine, O krishna, for there is none other than you to reslove this doubt.*

But O lord, I have another doubt, which none but yourself will be able to resolve (426-430). Therefore, O shri Govind (Krishna), enlighten me on this. Suppose, there is a man full of faith, who wanted to attain liberation without the practice of yoga. Leaving the place of senses, he proceeded along the path of faith with the object of reaching the state of self-realisation. But he could not reach the destination of libration nor could he retrace his steps (and enjoy the sense-objects). In this condition the sun of his existence set (and he got stranded). Just as a thin unseasonal cloud does not last and give rain, in the same way both the paths were closed to him. While the attainment of liberation remained distant, he was also deprived of sense enjoyment which he had left behind out of faith (431-435). In this way, when he loses both even when he remains full of faith, what state does he attain?"

The blessed Lord said:

40. *Neither here nor hereafter, O Partha, is there doom for him, for no one who does good, dear friend, treads the path of evil.*

Then Lord Krishna said, "O Partha, how can one who longs for the bliss of libration, reach any destination other than liberation? what happens is this that he has to take respite in his journey. But the happines which he attains in that state is not availableeven to gods. Had he pursued the practice of Yogta at a quicker pace, he would have attained liberation even before the end of his life span. But as he was lax in his effort, he had to tarry in the midst of his journey. But he is destined to reach the state of liberation in the end (436-440).

41. *Having attained the worlds of the virthous and living there for many years, he who has strayed from the pathe ofyoga is born in the house of the pure and prosperous.*

It is a wonder that this seeker attains easily the (celestial) world, to attain which even Lord Indra has to exert himself (by performing hundred sacrifices). While he is enjoying these elysian pleasures, he feels remorse and says "O God, why has this obstacle come in my way?" Then he is reborn in this mortal world into a virtuous family. Just as the plants which are reaped in theprocess of harvest bive out profuse shoots, in the same way his wealth increases. All members of his family tread the path of virtue, speak the truth with frankness and follow the code of conduct laid down in the scriptures (441-445). In this family the Vedas are his living

deity, his sesne of duty provides the code of conduct and discriminative thought is his adviser; God is the only object ofcontemplation and family-deity bestows prosperity. In this manner, the person who has strayed from the path of yoga takes birth on thestrength of his merit in a properous family, which provides him worldly pleasuers.

42. *Or may be, even in the family of yogis possessed of widsom. It is indeed very difficult to attain in this world a birth of this kind.*
43. *There he regains the knowledge acquired in the former body and thence he strives evermore for perfection, O Scion of the Kuru race.*

Or he who has strayed from yoga takes birth in the family of those yogis who performknowledge-sacrifice, who are well-versed in the subject of the self, who are the hereditary enjoyers of self-bliss, who have mastered the secret of the great doctrine and have attained the kingdom of heaven, who are the cuckoos singing in te forest of contenment (446-450), and who sit at the foot of the tree of discriminating knowledge. When he is born, the knowledge of the self sawns upon him. Just as light spreads out all around before the rise of the sun, so ominiscience weds him in his childhood without waiting for him to become a youth. Then the intelligence and all the lores acquired in the previous birth attend upon him and all the scriptures issue from his mouth. This yogi takes birth in such a noble family. destring which the denizens of heaven murrer prayers, perform sacrifices (451-455) and sing praises of this mortal world like bards,

44. *For by that very former practice, he is pushed forward involuntarily; a mere seeker of yoga too transcends the Vedic ritual.*

Then he acquires the wisdom which he had attained at the end of his previous birth. Just as a fortunate person born with the lags foremost is able to discover, by applying antimony to his eyes, and underground treasure, in the same way his intellect is able to grasp abstruse philosophical doctrines without receiving insttruction of a teacher. His hitherto unbridled senses come under his control, the mind merges in the life - breath (prana) and the prana along with the mind merges in the cidakasha (456-460). One knows not how, but yoga accrues to him without any effort on his part and samadhi comes in search of him. Then he appears as if he is lord Shiva (Bhairava) on the seat of yoga, of the glory of the commencement of yoga of the expecience of dispassion become visible in a human form. Or this Yogi become the measuring rod of wordly existence or the island of the eight branches of yoga. Just as fragrance takes the form of stadalwood, it looks as if contentment has taken on his form. His spiritual excellence displays itself in the stage when he is yet a seeker, as though he has emerged from the treasure - houlse of perfection.

45. *But the yogi who strives with assiduity is purified from sin; being perfected through many births he reashes the supreme goal.*

For he has now reached the shore of self-realisation after overcoming the obstacles of thousand lives in milions of years (461-465). Because of this all the means of emancipation follow him automatically and he occuties the royal throne of discriminati;ng knowledge. the knowledge, which transcends all thought, recedes and he becomes merged in Brahman, which is beyond the reach of all thought. Then the mental clouds melt away, the windiness of wind (prana) comes to an end and the cidakasha becames merged in the half syllabic bliss and espouses silence. He thus becomes the very embodiment of the Brahmic state, which is the highest goal. (466-470). He has already swept off completely all dirt in the water in the form of crazy notions accumulated in the previous births. so as soon as he is born, the auspicicous hour fixed for the wedding approaches and he is wedded to the Brahmic state and becomes one with it. Just as the cloud vanishes and becomes one with the sky, so he becomes merged; while in his body; with Brahman, which is the origin and dissolution of the universe.

46. *The Yogi is thought to be greater than the ascetics, greather than even the men of knowledge, greater than also the men of action. Therefore, be a Yogi, O Arjuna.*

With the desire to attain Brahman, the men of action, trusting in courage, take a dip in the current of six dutiies (appropriate to a Brahmin). With the same object, knowers, wearing the armour of knowledge, grapple with wordly existence (471-475). With the same aim the acetics try to climb the broken, difficult and slippery cliff in the form of austerities. The Yogi becomes one with Brahman which is the object of devotionand the God of sacrifice and so worthy of being worshipped by all. For this reason he is worthy of being adored by the men of action, flt to be known by the men of knowldege and is an eminent ascetic among ascetics. When his self eminent ascetic among ascetics. When his self merges in the supreme self, he attains to its greatness even while he is in this body (476-480). I have, therefore, been telling you with all my heart that you should yourself become a yogi.

47. *And among all the yogis too, he who, full of faith, worsips me, with his inner self absorbed in me, is deemed by me to be the best of yogis.*

Know ye that this yogi is the God of gods, my sole hapiness-nay my very life. He has the uninterrupted experince that I am the triad of the means of devotion, namely the devotee, devotion and the object of devotion. Moreover, it is difficult to describe in words the affection which subsists

between me and my devotee. The only simile which can describe our loving union is to say that I am the body and he is the soul in it. (481-485).

Sanjaya said to Dhritarashtra, "Thus spoke Shri Krishna, who is the moon that gladdens the chakora birds in the form of devotees, who is the ocean of all the best qualities and the sovereign of all the three worlds. The lord of the Yadus realised that the desire of Arjuna to listen to his teaching had now redoubled. Shri Krishna was overjoyed to see that Arjunas face revealed as in a mirror whatever he taught. In the excitement of this joy, he would now relate the story further. The next chapter will display the sentiment of serenity and open the bag containing the seeds of knowledge. Then the downpour of righteous feelings will soften the minds of the hearers, which will then become ready beds for sowing the seeds of knowldge (486-490). When the ground is steamed with the warmth of attention, shri Nivrittinath longed to sow the seeds of doctrines. My Guru has used me as the funnel for sowing the seeds and has placed the seeds in my mind after placing his palm on my head. Because of this whatever words will come out of my lips will penetrate directly the hearts of the saints. This apart, I shall now relate what the lord said to Arjuna. Please listen to it with wrapt attention, think over it with your understanding and try to apprehend its import with your mind. Then store this talk in your heart, so that it will gratify the minds of all you, saintly people (491-495). This talk will benefit everyone, will lead to the fulfilment of life's goal and conduce to great happiness. Now I shall descibe in the Ovi meter the clever and comely conversation which Lord Krishna had with Arjuna (496-497).

Chapter Seventh

WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

The blessed Lord said:

1. *Listen how with your mind fixed on me, practicing yoga and taking refuge in me, you shall know me, O Partha, to the uttermost beyond doubt.*
2. *I shall tell you in full about wisdom together with knowledge, by knowing which nothing remains that needs to be known.*

Then Lord Krishna said to Partha, you have already become endowed with yoga. I shall now explain to you wisdom along with worldly knowledge so that you will know me fully like a gem kept on your open palm. You may think why a person should need to possess this worldly knowledge. It is, however, essential to know it first. Then he is able to turn his back on worldly knowledge and to fix his mind on wisdom, just as a boat fastened to the shore does not rock. That which the intellect does not penetrate, that from which though beats a retreat and that from which there assigning does not pierce (1-5), That O Arjuna, is wisdom; other than this is worldly knowledge and that which regards the world as real is ignorance. Wisdom destroys all ignorance and worldly knowledge and conduces to the knowledge of the self. It spouts a stop to any further discourse on it or the desire to hear it and all talk about distinctions of high and low. I shall explain to you this wisdom in words, so that even if you know a little of it, it will comfort you.

3. *Among thousands of men one perhaps strives for perfection; and even among those who strive and become perfect, rare is the person who knows me in truth.*

Really among thousands only a few wish to attain to his wisdom and among these there is rarely one who comes to know me (6-10). When after carefully selecting every soldier in this world, an army is organized hundred thousand strong, and when the soldiers of this army receive blows of weapons, only one among them comes out victorious. so thousands of persons leap into the flood of god-realization, but hardly one reaches the further shore. This wisdom is not ordinary, but extraordinary knowledge. I shall explain it to you later, but now I shall tell you about worldly knowledge.

4. *Earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intellect and egoism - these constitute my eightfold nature.*

O Partha, give me your attention. Just as the body has a shadow, these principles such as mahat are my Maya (11-15). This is called prakriti, which consists of eight different parts. All the three worlds are produced by this prakriti. If you ask me what these eight parts are, I shall explain them to you in detail. Earth, water, wind, fire and space, mind, intellect and egoism are these different parts.

5. *This is (my) inferior nature; other than this know my higher nature, O mighty armed (Arjuna); consisting of living beings, by which this world is upheld.*

   My higher Prakriti is the state of equilibrium of these eight parts; this is also known as Jivabhuta as it gives life to the insentient (body), enlivens the intellect and makes the mind experience grief and delusion (16-20). The intellect owes its intelligence to the contact with this higher Maya and the egoism resulting from her sustains the world.

6. *Know that all beings have this prakriti as their womb; of this universe I am the origin as also the dissolution.*

   When this subtle prakriti becomes united with the gross, then the creation (minting) of beings in this world starts. the dies, which produce these beings, bear four stamps and although they have the same worth, they are of different species. These species number eighty-four lakhs and their collection is unlimited. The inner sanctum of the Admaya is filled with the coins of these creatures. In this manner the Adimaya produces such countless number of coins of the same worth from the five great elements and she alone is able to keep a count of them (21-25). the coins, which she multiplies after testing them, she melts them later; in the meantime she keeps them engaged in action. If we leave aside this figure of speech, in plain words I can say that this prakriti alone lays out this diversity of name and form. As this prakriti is a reflection of mine and nothing else, I alone am the cause of the origin, the Middle State and the dissolution of the world.

7. *There is none whatever higher than me, O winner of wealth. All this is strung in me like rows of pearls in a string.*

   If we start looking for the source of a mirage, we find that it originates not from the rays of the sun, but the sun itself. So Arjuna, when this Prakriti manifested as the world begins to dissolve, then know that I alone exist (26-30). Thus all that is perceptible and imperceptible abides in me. all this world is held by me like pearls held in a string. Just as beads of gold are strung in a thread of gold, this world, both internal and external is upheld by me.

8. *I am the taste in water, the light in the moon and the sun, the syllable Om in all Vedas, the sound in space and manhood in men.*
9. *I am the sweet fragrance in the earth, the brilliance in fire, I am life in all beings, and austerity in ascetics.*

That which is taste in water, the touch in the wind, the light in the sun and the moon, knows that to be myself. I am the natural fragrance in the earth, the sound in the sky and the Omkara in Vedas. I tell you I am the manhood which resides in man and which is the essence of his ego (31-35). When you remove the cover of what is known as fire, the real nature of light becomes manifest; I am that light. In these three worlds, creatures take birth in different species and subsist in different ways. Some drink the wind, some live on grass, some live on food and some are nourished on water. In this way whatever is the means of livelihood, which suits the nature of every creature, I am that means.

10. *Know me, O Partha, to be the eternal seed of all beings. I am the intellect of the intelligent, and the brilliance of the brilliant.*
11. *I am the strength of the strong free from desire and attachment; I am the passion among creatures, not contrary to duty, O best of Bharatas.*

I am that which in the beginning of creation sprouts in the form of akasha and grows and then devours the letters of Omkara at the time of dissolution (36-40). I am that which appears as the world as long as the world has form and exists in a formless state at the time of dissolution, I am that beginnigless seed of the world; I am showing it to you as if you are holding it on your open palm. When you will compare this knowledge with the samkhya doctrine, then you will come to know the purport of my discourse. Now leaving aside this irrelevant talk, I would tell you this knowledge in brief. Know without doubt that I am the penance of the ascetic, the strength of the strong and the intellect of the intelligent (41-45). I am that desire among creatures which finds fulfillment in the acquisition of wealth and the performance of duty, so said lord Krishna. Even though this pure desire gratifies the senses according to the flow of his feelings, the yogi does not allow them to go against the dictates f duty. When this desire leaves the bypath of prohibited actions and goes by the royal path of prescribed actions, he always carries the lamp of self-restraint. Conducting itself thus, this desire fulfills the demands of duty and conduces to liberation. It fosters, under the power of Vedic ritualism, the growth of the creeper in the form of universal life in such a way that overlade with foliage and fruit, it reaches consummation in liberation (46-50). The supreme yogi said, I am that restrained desire, which provides the seed for the creation of the universe. Why should I tell you all this? know that all this totality of created things has originated from me.

12. *Know that whatever conditions there are, whiter they belong to the sattva, rajas or tamas quality, they arise from me alone and are in me, but I am not in them.*

    Know that whatever god, passionate and dull forms there are, they have all originated from me. Just as the wakeful state does not sink in the deep waters of dream, so even though they have originated from me, I am not in them. When a seed full of sap sprouts and later on turns into wood (51-55), does the wood possess in it the quality of the seed? So although the qualities of goodness etc. arise from me, I am not in their modifications. The clouds brushing against one another, does it contain water? The smoke, no doubt, comes out of fire, but does it contain fire? Likewise, all the modifications arise from me, but I am not in them.

13. *This whole world deluded by these three conditions of gunas, does not recognize me, who am imperishable and beyond the three ganas.*

    But Just as the moss begot from water covers it up, or the clouds cover up the sky (56-60), or the unreal dream seems real under the sway of sleep and makes one forget its unreality, or the cataract which is formed from water in the eye affects one's sight, in the same manner this Maya, consisting of the three gunas, which is my reflection and shadow, acts as a veil hiding my true nature. Therefore, the beings created by me do not know me and are not in me, just as pearls produced from water do not get dissolved in water. The pot made out of clay mixes into it easily, but does not do so when baked in fire (61-65); so all the creatures are truly my limbs and have come into being through the play of my Maya. so though they belong to me, they are not the self and do not recognize me and have become blinded by sense-objects and deluded by the notions of "I" and "Mine".

14. *This divine Maya, consisting of gunas is difficult to cross. Those who take refuge in me alone pass beyond this Maya.*
15. *Not in me do the evil doing, deluded and vile men take refuge; (for) deprived of wisdom by Maya they adopt demoniacal ways.*

    Now, O Arjuna, how can one cross this Maya of mine, consisting of Mahat etc. and become one with me? This river of Maya had its origin on the precipice of the mountain of Brahman, which desired to become many and produced tiny bubbles of fine elements. This river has been rushing with great speed between the steep banks of action and renunciation (66-70). And when the clouds in the form of the three qualities send heavy reins, she sweeps away in the flood of delusion the town in the form of self-control and restraint of the senses. This river is full of the whirlpools of hatred and meanders with bends of malice, while there bask in it big fish in the form of heedlessness. The river has many turnings of worldly

existence, in which it becomes flooded with action and inaction, and dry leaves and other rubbish in the form of pleasure and pain keep floating on its water. Waves of passion toss against the form of beings get accumulated there. From the swift currents of ego-sense, arise bubbles of pride of knowledge, wealth and power which 'burst into waves of sense-objects (71-75). The billows in the form of sunset and sunrise create deep waters in the form of cycles of births and deaths in which bubbles in the form of bodies made up of five elements appear and disappear. There the bid fish in the form of infatuation and delusion swallow the flesh of fortitude, and the whirlpools of ignorance revolve all around. The Jiva is caught in the muddy water of delusion and the mire of desires and the noise of his activities arising from the rajas quality reaches heaven. In this river there are currents of tamas quality and deep waters of sattva quality. In short, this Maya is full of mischief. When the billows of rebirths rise, they carry away the ramparts of Satyaloka, and then the rocks of the cosmic globes speedily come down with a bang (76-80). Because of the great speed of its currents these billows do not come to a stop. Who can swim across this flooded river of Maya?

It is surprising that whatever attempts were made to cross this river turned out to be obstacles. Those who leaped into it relying on the power of their intellect are not traceable. Those who jumped into the deep waters of knowledge were devoured by pride. Those who went in the boat of the three Vedas, loading it with rocks full of conceit of their learning, were swallowed by the big fish of affiance. Those, who relying on the strength of their youth took to amorous pursuits, were chewed to death by crocodiles in the form of sensuous pleasures (81-85). They were soon caught in the wave of old age and became entangled in the net of dotage. When being sashes against the rocks of grief and getting choked in the whirlpool of mire they tried to raise their head, they were pecked at by vultures in the form of calamities. Caught in the quagmire of grief they were lost in the sands of death and so those who took recourse to sensuous pleasures in youth were lost forever. Those who tied a float around the belly in the form of sacrificial rites were caught in the rocky fissures in the form of heavenly pleasures. Those who relied on the arms of actions hoping for liberation were caught in the maze of injunctions and prohibition (86-90). In this river the canoe of dispassion cannot enter and the bamboo of discrimination could not hold out. Perhaps the eightfold yoga would enable one to cross this river. To say that a person can cross it by his own effort is as difficult as to get well without observing the prescribed diet. If it is possible for a good man to understand the evil designs of a wicked person or for a greedy person to turn his back on riches, or for a thief to attend an open meeting or for the fish to swallow a bait, or for a coward to overpower an evil spirit or the young one of a doe to gnaw the snare set by a hunter, or for an ant to climb the Meru mountain, then alone will a living being reach the other shore of this Maya (91-95) Justas it is difficult for a lustful person

to keep his wife under control, so a person cannot cross this river of Maya (by his own effort). But he who surrenders himself to me easily crosses this river of Maya, in fact the mirage in the form of Maya vanishes even on this side of the river for him who has girded himself for the experience of Brahman and has found the raft in the form of self-knowledge and the Guru as the steersman. Then throwing away the burden of egoism and escaping the gale of doubt and the strong current of passion, he reaches the ford of knowledge, which is the easiest way of gaining the experience of absolute unity. Then taking a leap forward towards the other shore of dispassion (96-100) and Treading the water with powerful strokes of arms in the form of renunciation and floating on the strength of his staunch faith that he himself is the supreme Brahman, he reaches without effort the other shore of dispassion. Those who worship me like this transcend this Maya, but such devotees are rare, not many.

16. *O Arjuna, virtuous persons of four kinds worship me-those in distress, the seeker of knowledge, the seeker of wealth and the man of wisdom, O best of Bharatas.*
17. *Of these the man of wisdom, ever controlled and devoted to One (i.e. Me) alone, excels; for I am exceedingly dear to a man of wisdom, and he too is bear to me.*

But other who is possessed by the evil spirit of egoism has become oblivious of self-knowledge. They do not remember how the apparel of self-restraint has slipped away, and without feeling any shame for their downfall, they merrily perform actions prohibited by the Vedas. They forget that they have come to inhabit the home of the human body for a specific purpose (101-105) and prattle about 'Me' and "Mine" on the track of sense-enjoyment, surrounding themselves by clusters of various passions. When the receive buffets of grief and misery they suffer from loss of memory. This is because they have come under the sway of Maya.

There are four kinds of devotees who have achieved the ends of human life through devotion to me. The first is known as man in distress, the second is the seeker of knowledge, the third is the seeker of wealth and the forth is the man of wisdom. some desire relief from misery, some desire to know the Truth and some desire to amass wealth (106-110). But the fourth kind has nothing to achieve in return. He is the man of wisdom, my true devotee, because in the light of knowledge he has gone beyond duality and unity. Thought he has becomes one with me, he still remains my devotee. Just as a crystal placed in moving water seems moving for a moment, the same is the case of a man of wisdom. when the wind stops it becomes identified with the sky, so when the devotee becomes one with me, he still continues to be a devotee. When the wind blows it appears to have a separate existence from the sky, otherwise it continues to be with it (111-115). So when the devotee performs actions, he appears as a

devotee, but internally he has attained identity with me. And in the light of knowledge, he regards me as his self; and so I too, being pleased with him, consider him as my very self. if a person works in full realization of his true state beyond hispresent life, can he, though in a separate body, remain separate from me?

18. *Noble indeed are all these, but I hold the man of wisdom as my very self. For with a concentrated mind, he has resorted to me alone as the supreme goal.*

    I like even the devotee who worships me with a selfish motive, but I really love the devotee who has realized me. O Arjuna, the people bind the legs of a cow to milk her, but how does she suckle the calf without being so bound (116-120)? Because the calf does not recognize anyone else with its heart and soul and knows the cow to be its mother by mere sight. The calf is solely devoted to the cow and so the cow likes it. Shri Jnanadeva says, undoubtedly what the lord said is absolutely true. Then the Lord said, no doubt, I like the otter three kinds of devotees who are also god. just as the river joins the sea without looking backward, so the devotee who realizes me forgets the wordly existence. When the river of experience, starting from the valley of his mind, meets me, he becomes one with me. What more can I say of him (121-125)? Thus he, who is called a jnani is my very self. I should not have said this, but I spoke as the occasion required it.

19. *At the end of many birth the man of wisdom attains to Me, (knowing that) Vasudeva is All; such a great soul is rare to find.*

    He (a man of wisdom) avoids the difficult situations of desire and anger in the thickets of sensuous pleasures and ascending the mountain of good intentions, takes, O valiant Arjuna, in the company of holy men, the royal road of moral conduct, leaving the bypath of evil actions. He traceries the way of devotion without wearing the shoes in the form of desire for the fruit of action during many births. Who will then keep an account of the methods for doing it? In this way, when after assuming many bodies he has traveled through the night of ignorance, his karma is destroyed ushering in the dawn of knowledge (126-130). Then with the grace of his Guru, he enjoys the mild rays of the sun of knowledge, and the glorious treasure of the unity of all things comes into his vision. Then wherever he casts his eyes, he sees me alone, and even if he sits quietly, he sees nothing else but me. Just as the pot sunk in water has water both within and without, so he lives in me and I abide both inside and outside of him. His state cannot be described in words, so what I have said is enough. The treasure house of knowledge becomes open to him and wherever he goes, he thinks that he has become the whole world (131-135). He has the faith born of experience that the world is the manifestation of god and

so he is the great devotee and jnani as well. O Arjuna, he in whose experience this whole world, both animate and inanimate, is contained, is a great soul, who is difficult to come across. then, O Arjuna, there are those who, blinded by the darkness born of attachment to the fruits of actions, worship me with a selfish motive.

20. *But those tabbed of true knowledge by various desires resort to the deities, observing this or that rule, governed by their own natures.*

    When desire enters their heart due to their attachment to the fruits of actions, then know that the light of knowledge is extinguished. So when they are overtaken by the darkness of ignorance externally and internally, they forget me and eagerly worship other gods with their heart and soul (136-140). Such persons become slaves of Maya, and demean themselves in the pursuit of sensuous pleasures. What can one say of such persons who are addicted to the worldly pleasures? They worship these deities after making sure of the rules to be followed, the articles of worship needed and the things to be offered to them.

21. *Whichever deity a devotee seeks to worship with faith, I make his faith unflinching.*

    But, whoever worships a deity with a desire for reward, I grant that desire myself. they do not understand that these deities are not different from me and from one another.

22. *Imbued with that faith he seeks to propitiate that deity and obtain from it the desired objects verily granted by me alone.*

    So imbued with this faith, they carry out the worship properly until it bears fruit (141-145). In this way, they receive the fruit desired by them, but in reality that fruit is granted to them by me alone.

23. *But the reward of the men of poor wit has an end. Those who worship the deities go to them, My devotee's alone come to me.*

    Such devotees do not know me; because they do not get over their narrow views. Though they receive the desired fruit, it is perishable. Why say more! such worship only leads to the cycle of birth and death. Their enjoyment of fruit is like the experience in a dream. Even if we leave this aside, whatever deity he likes to worship, he attains to its region only. But those who resort to my way heart and soul, attain to oneness with me on leaving the body (146-150).

24. *The ignorant think of me the unmanifest as having manifestation, not knowing my supreme nature, unchanging and unsurpassed.*

But the ordinary men do not act thus and lose their good. They wish to swim by taking water in their hand. Why should a person take a dip in the sea of nectar and keep his mouth shut and yearn to drink from a dirty pond?

Why should he not take a dip in the sea of nectar and become immortal after drinking nectar? Why, O Arjuna, does he not leave the cage of desire and rise freely in the sky on the wings of experience? Why does he not soar high happily in the sky of self, which has spread all-around in its fully glory (151-155)? why does he try to measure me who am imitates, regard me who am formless as become manifest, and take the trouble to please me by external means, when I dwell in their heart. But if you ask me, O son of Pandu, such questions do not find favor with anyone.

25. *Nor am I revealed to everyone, being veiled by Maya; this deluded world knows me not as unborn and eternal.*

Being blinded by the film of the Adimaya over their eyes, they do not see me through attachment to the body, though I am the light. Else is there anything in which I do not reside? Is there any water without taste? Is there anyone who is not touched by the breeze? Is there anything not enveloped by space? I alone abide in this world (156-160).

26. *I know the beings that are past, those that are present and those that are yet to home, but no one knows Me, O Arjuna.*

O Arjuna, I remained in all creatures that have been: I am also in those who exist at this time. Those who are going to come in future are not separate from me. In reality nothing is born, and nothing dies. No one can conceive of the creatures because of their unreality, just as no one can say whether the serpent superimposed on the rope is black, Grey or of wheat color. In this way, O son of Pandu, I abide ever in these creatures. But it is a different story why they are involved in this worldly existence. I shall tell you in brief this story, please listen. When egoism fell in love with the body (161-165).

27. *Confused by the pairs that spring from desire and hatred, all creatures in creation walk in delusion, O Bharata, source of the foes.*

A daughter named desire was born out of this love. When she came of age, she mated with hatred. She gave birth to a son, by name delusion, in the form of pleasure and pain, and he was brought up by his grandfather, egoism. He was hostile to fortitude and restraint of the senses and was nourished on the milk of hope. Then. O Arjuna, he became infatuated by the wine of discontent, and lived happily with excitement in a room of sensuous pleasure. He spread thorns of doubt in the way of pure devotion

and laid out bypaths of evil deeds (166-170). Because of this all creatures, which were deluded and caught in the jungle of worldly existence, were oppressed by the onslaught of misery,

28. *But as for virtuous men whose sins have come to an end, they, free from the delusive pairs of opposites, worship me with steadfast vows.*

Bit virtuous men who see these blunt thorns of doubts are not deterred by the delusion of mind. They crush these thorns of doubt by following the steps of one-pointed devotion and avoid the forest of great sin. Then they come close to me, with the speedy gait of virtue, and so escape from the clutches of way layers in the form of desire and anger.

29. *They, who resorting to Me, strive for freedom firm old age and death, know all about Brahman, the self and action in its entirely.*

O Partha, When one strives with faith to put an end to birth and death (174-175), then his effort brings him the fruit of God - realization from which oozes the juice of perfection. When he attains fulfillment, he sees the world as full of joy, and his desire for self-realization is satisfied. Then his activity stops and his mind rest in peace. Then, O Arjuna, he soon realizes the Self, as he invests me as capital in his spiritual undertaking. with increase in his equanimity, he acquires the wealth of unity with Brahman, and then does not experience the penury of dualism.

30. *They who know me as supreme over elements, deities and sacrifice, also know me, with minds controlled, even at the time of departure from this world.*

House who knowing my essential nature as Adhibhuta through experience, comprehend my divine state (176-180); and when they come to know me by way of understanding as the lord of sacrifice, they are not affected by the separation of the body. Otherwise wen the thread of life is likely to snap, the living beings become agitated about their impending death. Seeing them, even those who are not going to die feel that the end of the world has arrived. But I know not how, those who are devote to me, do not part from me even at the time of departure. Know that those who have attained to wisdom have become self-controlled yogis.

When lord Krishna was pouting out this discourse through the phial in the form of these words, Arjuna did not move forward to receive joined together. His mind was still lingering over the words explaining over the words explaining Brahman (181-185), which were full of meaning like juicy fruits and which spread fragrance of devotion all around. These words of the lord had entered his ears, carried by the cool breeze of grace. They seemed like ripe fruits fallen from a tree, fashioned as it were from

Vedanta doctrines and coated with the sugar of bliss and dipped in the ocean of Brahman. Astonished by the purity and excellence of these words, Arjuna began to drink them with a fixed gaze. He became so happy that he mocked at heaven and his heart was filled with extreme joy (186-190). Enamoured by the external beauty of these words, Arjuna felt a craving for tasting their juicy substance. Therefore, he took these in the palm of inference and put them in his mouth in the form of experience. But the tongue of thought could not bolt them nor could the teeth of reason crack them. knowing this Arjuna would not touch them with his mouth. He said in astonishment, "Oh! these are like the glittering reflections of stars in water. How have I been deceived by their external form! They are not words but the folds of akasha. Even if my intellect were to take a dip in them, it would not be able to fathom them (191-195)".

With these toughts, Arjuna turned his gaze towards the lord, and the great warrior began to entreat him. He said, "O lord, these seven words are uncommon and untested. Can one comprehend philosophic truths by merely hearing words without concentration? Now your discourse in not simple. Even astonishment became amazed seeing this string of words. When their rays entered my heart through the windows of my ears, my attention slipped because of stupor (196-200). I long to know the meaning of these words and cannot brook any furniture delay. Therefore, O lord, explain them to me without loss of time.

Note how skillfully Arjuna has asked this question by taking note of the ground covered by the lord, by keeping in view his main object and expressing meanwhile his intention. In doing so, Arjuna did not overstep the bounds of propriety and stopped short of hugging the lord. Only ambidextrous Arjuna knew how a disciple should proceed with humility while asking his guru to explain a point. Note with what relish Sanjaya will tell us of Arjuna's query and the lord's reply to it (201-205). Now listen carefully to this narration, which will be told in simple Marathi, so that it will have a greater appeal to the eyes than to the ears. Before the intellect relishes the mellifluous words, the beauty of its diction will conquer the senses. The jasmine flowers please the nostrils by their fragrance, but does not their beauty give pleasure to the eyes? So the beauty of Marathi diction will so please the senses that they will find it easy to grasp the philosophical truths. Please, therefore, listen to these words, which silences all talk, so says Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivritti (206-210).

Chapter Eighth

THE IMPERISHABLE BRAHMAN

Arjuna said:

1. *What is that Brahman, what is the self? What is Acton, O supreme Person? What is called Adhibhuta? What is said to be Adhidavata?*

   Then Arjuna said, I am now listening carefully. Kindly explain to me what I have asked you. Tell me what is Brahman, what is named karma, and what is called Adhyatma? What is Abhibhuta, what is Adhidaivata? Tell me clearly so that I can understand them.

2. *Who and how is the Adhiyajna here in this body, O slayer of Madhu? and how at the time of death are you to be known by the self-possessed?*

   O lord, what is the Adhiyajna in this body, which does not come within the reach of inference? And tell me, O Krishna, how are you to be known at the time of departure with a restrained mind (1-5)? Look, if a lucky person sleeps in a mansion built of philosopher's stones, then even if he blurts something in sleep, it does not become futile. No sooner had Arjuna uttered these words, the lord said, "Listen well to this reply to your question,"

   (Shri Jnanadeva says) Arjuna is the calf of the wish - yielding cow, and over him was the shade of wish-bearing trees. It is, therefore not surprising that his desires came to be fulfilled. Even he whom Lord Krishna kills in wrath, attains to the experience of the Supreme. Then how can one whom he favors with instruction not attain it? When a person becomes one with the lord, he becomes the self; and then the miraculous powers attend upon him in the yard of his desires (6-10). Arjuna had this unlimited love for Lord Krishna and so his desires always bore fruit. For this reason, the lord, anticipating his intent, served him a dish in the form of a reply. When the infant turns to the breast, the mother knows that it is hungry. Does the infant then tell her in words to suckle it? Therefore, it does not surprise me, if the gracious teacher has such affection for his disciple. Now listen to what the lord said.

   The blessed lord said:

3. *The imperishable is the supreme Brahman; its essential nature is the self, and that which cause the existence of beings in known as action.*

Then the supreme lord said, "The supreme self is that which dwells in this hollow body, but does not ever ooze out (11-15). It is not void, although it is so subtle that one can strain it in the fabric of akasha, and though it is so very fine and thin, it does not trickle down from the cloak of the world even though thoroughly shaken. And even after the assumption of form, it does not know the vicissitudes of life and does not perish with the disappearance of the form. It continues to exist in its own eternal state; and this inherent nature of Brahman is known as Adhyatma.

Then just as all of a sudden, simultaneously only knows not how, clusters of clouds of different hues appear in the sky (16-20), so from that pure formless Brahman different entities such as mahat emerge and the universe takes shape. One the heath of formless Brahman, the seed of the primal will, 'let tem be many,' takes root and spread out different primordial eggs. If you look carefully, every primordial egg is full of such seeds, by which countless creatures come into being and fade away. Then different parts of these primordial eggs go on briskly conceiving the will to become many, giving rise to a flood of creations. But in all this creation abides the supreme Brahman without a second, and the manifold creation, which we see, is like a mirage (21-25). One does not know how these similarities and distinctions have come about. If it is said that this world has come into existence without a cause, we see that there are thousands of species, which have come into existence. One cannot place any limit to the number of creatures and things. But if you try to discover the origin, you know that it is Brahman. One does not see the author of this creation nor any rational basis for it; but the creative activity is going on all the same. All that we see is name and form without an apparent originator. The activity that arises from this is known as karma.

4. *The perishable existence is Adhibhuta; the self is the Adhidaivata. I am myself the Adhiyajna in this body, O best among men.*

Now I shall explain what is known as Adhibhutta. As the cloud appears and vanishes (26-30), so there is an apparent worldly existence, which does not exist in reality; it has come into being through the combination of five elements. It comes into being from their combination, but its name and form etc. Vanishes with the separation of the elements. This material existence is known as Adhibhuta. The embodied self is the Adhidaivata who enjoys whatever the prakriti produces. He is the witness of intelligence, the lord of the senses and is the resting-place of desire after death, as the tree is the resting-place of birds after sunset. He is none else that the supreme self, but being asleep in his egoism, he experiences joy and sorrow from his activities as in a dream (31-35). What is commonly known as Jiva, the embodied self, is the Adhidaivata, the presiding deity over the five elements.

Know yea, O Arjuna that I am the Adhiyajna in this body, who wipes out the identification of the self with the body. Indeed, I am also the Adhibhuta and the Adhidaivata, but when pure gold is mixed with an alloy, does it become impure? Even then the pure gold does not get soiled or become blended with the alloy, but so long as it remains mixed, it has to be considered as an alloy, not pure gold. But, when the Adhibhuta and Adhidaivata are covered by the veil of ignorance, they are regarded as different from me (36-40). The moment this veil of ignorance is removed, the difference vanishes; and they become one with me; but were they really different from me? If a crystal is placed on a bunch of hair, it appears to the eye as split in two. When, however, the hair is removed, the crack in the crystal disappears. Does this mean that the two pieces have been soldered now? The crystal was whole, but appeared to be cracked because it had come into contact with the hair; when the hair was removed, it looked without a crack as before. Similarly, when the ego-sense vanishes, the oneness of the Adhibhuta etc. Which is already there is restored. That with which is already there is restored. That with which they become one is myself, the Adhiyajna (41-45). Having this in view, I had told you that all sacrifices are produced by actions. I have disclosed to you the treasure of bliss, which is freedom from actions, where all the souls take rest.

First the aspirant should kindle the fire of senses, and then in its flames he should offer the oblation of ingredients of sense-objects. Then clearing the ground and sitting in the form of the diamond posture, he should form the altar of mulabandha under the canopy of his body. Then he should offer in the sacrificial pit the ingredients of senses by reciting the mantras of yoga (46-50). Thereafter by performing the sacrificial rite wit the restraint of smokeless fire of knowledge. When he sacrifices his all in the fire of knowledge, he merges in the knowable, which remains in its true form. This knowable is the Adhiyajna, so said lord Krishna and this immediately appealed to intelligent Arjuna. Knowing this, Lord Krishna said, "O Partha, you listen well." Hearing these words, Arjuna was very much gratified. Looks, only the mother or the Guru knows how to feel joy at the satisfaction of her child or his disciple (51-55). Then the sattvic emotions crowded in the mind of lord Krishna even before Arjuna, but controlling them somehow through his intellect, e began a speech, tender and witty, which was like fragrance of ripe happiness or the surge of cool nectar. He said, "O Arjuna, the prince of listeners, listen. Then that (knowledge) which destroys Maya is itself dissolved.

5. *Whoever departs casting off his body, thinking of me alone, at the time of death, he attains to My State without doubt.*

What I had told you so far is known as Adhiyajna. Those who know me as Adhiyajna from beginning to end, regard the body as a cloak and remain

in me, as the hermitage, filled with space, remains in space (56-60). Since they have entered the room of conviction in the bosom of experience, they do not remember wordly matters. When they become one with me both externally and internally, the scales of the five gross elements drop down without his knowledge. When he is not aware of his body while dwelling in it, how will he feel pain when it drops down? His experience remains firm even at the time of death. This experience is cast in the image of unity, set in the frame of eternity and so washed clean in the ocean of oneness with me that it does not get soiled again. When a jar immersed in deep water, breaks, does the water inside and outside of it split into two (61-65)? Or when a snake casts off his skin or a person disrobes himself because of heat, do his limbs get broken? When the name and form are destroyed, Brahman remains as it is; if the intellect becomes one with it how will it become confused? So whoever gives up the ghost knowing me such, becomes one with me after death.

6. *Whatever being a person thinks of at the end of life and abandons his body, he attains to that very being, O Arjuna, being steeped constantly in its thought.*

   The general rule is that when the time of death arrives, whatever he remembers at that time, he becomes that. This is like a person, running through fright with great speed, suddenly falls in a well (66-70). He is not able to control himself and avoid the fall and so he has no other go but to fall in that well. Likewise whatever thing a person meditates up on at the time of death, he cannot avoid becoming that in any way, whatever thing he thinks of when he is awake, that thing appears before him in a dream when he falls asleep. So whatever longing he has while alive, it becomes augmented when he is on the brink of death. And so, whatever he remembers at the time of death, he attains to that state. Therefore, you should always remember me (71-75).

7. *Therefore at all times think of fight and me. With your mind and intellect fixed on me, you shall attain to me without doubt.*

   Whatever you see with your eyes or hear with your ears, whatever you think of in your mind or speak with your tongue make me the object of all that inside and outside; then you will become one with me at all times. When this happens, you have no fear of death when you leave the body. Then why should you feel afraid of death in war? If you surrender your mind and intellect truly to me, you will attain to me; this is my solemn promise to you. If you have any doubt as to how it will come to pass, you should practice yoga and see for yourself and if you do not succeed, get cross with me (76-80).

8. *By thinking of Him, O Partha, with the mind engrossed in yogic practice, and not wandering elsewhere, one attains to the person supreme and divine.*

   By practicing yoga make your mind pure and strong, by adopting proper means even a cripple can climb a mountain. Then by this yogic practice direct your mind to the supreme self; then it matters not whether your body remains or departs. If the mind, which runs after different goals, is lost in the self, then who will remember whether the body has remained or gone? When the river with its noisy currents joins the sea, does it come back to see what happened after it left? Never, it becomes one with the sea. So the mind also becomes one with Brahman, which is of the nature of bliss and which puts a stop to transmigration (81-85).

9. *He who remembers the wise, the ancient ruler, subtler than the subtle, the supporter of all, of inconceivable form, effluent like the sun, beyond darkness,*
10. *At the time of death, with a steady mind, endowed with devotion and power of yoga, having fixed his breath between the eyebrows, attains to the person supreme and Divine.*

    The Brahman is formless, and without birth and death, and is whole and the witness of all. It is more ancient than akasha and subtler than the atom. The universe starts its activity in its presence. It creative all things and sustains the whole universe, is incomprehensible and beyond the reach of reason. Look , as the white ants cannot enter live coal or darkens cannot enter the sunlight, it is not visible to the physical eye during daylight. It is like a heap of sun's rays which looks like a dawn to those who know, and the words 'rising' and 'setting' do not apply to it even by way of metaphorical import (86-90). He remembers that spotless Brahman at the time of death with a steady mind. He sits in the lotus posture, facing the north, thinking of the joy of karmayoga in his mind and hastens to attain the true nature of Brahman by collecting his mind and holding it dear. Then he leads his prana through the vein known as sushumna first into the plexus known as ajnachakra and then to the Brahmarandhra. When the prana enters the cidakasha, he sees the combination of body and mind as an unreal appearance (91-95). Then with a steady mind full of devotional love, controlling him through the power of yoga and keeping his mind steady on the center of the eyebrows, he tries to dissolve his body and mind. Then just as the sound of a bell becomes dissolved in the bell, or the flame of a lamp kept under a vessel is extinguished without anybody coming to know of it, he leaves behind his body in peace. He then attains to the supreme self also known as the supreme person, and my highest light.

11. *That which the Veda-knows calls Imperishable, which the self-controlled enter free from passion, and desiring which they practice continence that goal I shall declare to you briefly.*

    Those who are a mine of wisdom, which is the consummation of all knowledge, call it the imperishable with full understanding (96-100). The sky is not blown away by a tempest unlike the cloud. Had it been a cloud, would it have withstood the tempest? That which is known and measured by the intellect is perishable and that which is beyond comprehension is Imperishable. This which the knows of Vedas call the Imperishable is the Supreme self and it is beyond the prakriti. Then those who abandon the sense-objects like poison, purify the senses and remaining unattached in the body and full of dispassion wait for Him, whom even the desireless wish to attain (101-105), In order to attain that state, they do not mind taking the difficult vow of celibacy, restraining the senses with severity. I shall tell you again about that state, which those who depart in its way attain, which is fathomless and difficult to reach and in the shallow waters of which the Vedas could take only a dip. Then Arjuna said. "O Lord, I was on the point of asking you this, but you granted me this favor. So please tell me, but make it very simple for me." Then said the light of the three worlds. "Don't I know you well? I shall tell you all this in brief, listen (106-110). Therefore, controlling the natural habit of the mind to wander outside, ensure that it remains confined inside your hart.

12. *Closing all the doors of the senses, confining the mind in the heart, fixing the prana within the head, resorting to yogic concentration,*

    This will happen only when the doors of the senses are shut with the lock of restraint. When the mind is so confined, it remains stay put in the heart, just as a cripple does not leave the precincts of his home. When the mind comes to rest, then you should control the breath meditating on Om and then take the prana gradually to the recess of the heart and hold it through concentration so that it stops short of merging in akasha, until the three syllabic feet of Om sink in its half (111-115). He should hold the Prana in the chidakasha and when the syllable Om unites with it, it remains at peace in the chidakasha.

13. *Whoever departs, relinquishing his body, thinking of me and uttering the sacred syllable Om, attains to the highest goal.*

    Then the remembrance of Om stops and the prana also become merged in it and then only the blissful Brahman remains at the end of Om. Therefore, Om in my only name, nay it is Brahman in the form of one letter. He, who remembering this supreme nature of mine abandons his body, positively attains to me. Then there remains nothing else beyond me for him to attain. But, Arjuna, a doubt may arise in your mind, as to how a

person could bring himself to remember me at the time of death (116-120). When the senses become sluggish, the pleasure in living is lost and the signs of death become manifest both within and without, then who can assume a posture, restrain his senses and meditate on Om and with whose mind? you should not entertain this doubt in your mind. If you render service to me at all times, I shall be your servant at the time of your death.

14. *He who constantly thinks of me, without thought for another, I am easy to attain, O Partha, for that ever controlled yogic.*
15. *After reaching me, the great souls do not get rebirth, the abode of impermanent pain; (for) they have reached the highest perfection.*

Those who have renounced sensual pleasures and restrained their senses, they keep Me in their heart and enjoy bliss. While enjoying this bliss, they do not feel hunger and thirst, then who cares for the poor senses such as the eyes (121-125)? If even those who have become ever united with me, heart and soul, and worship me after becoming one with me, have to remember me at the time of death for me to go to their help, then of what use is their worship? O Partha, When a needy person in danger invokes me for help, don't I feel distressed and hasten to give him relief? And, if I give my devotees the same treatment, who will hanker after me? Therefore, do not entertain this doubt in your mind. if I were to run to them only when they remember me, I will not able to endure the obligation, which I owe to them (126-130). In order to repay the debt due to them, I wait upon them at the time of their death. In order that my delicate devotees should not suffer the pangs of separation from the body, I keep them in the cell of self-knowledge. I keep them in the cool and quiet shade of my remembrance, so that their mind will always remain concentrated on me. Therefore the peril of death does not affect my devotees and I bring them to myself safe and sound. Divesting them of the covering of their body and shedding the dust of their false pride and keeping intact their pure desires, I gather them to me (131-135). And since the devotees are not identified with the body, they too do not feel pain at the separation of the body. Since they have already attained to me, they do not expect me to meet them at the time of death and draw them to me. Truly speaking, their existence is a mere reflection in the body, just as the moonlight, though reflected in water, remains in the moon. So I am easy to attain for those who are constantly absorbed in yoga, and they become one with me without doubt after death.

This body, O Partha, is a bower of trees in the form of afflictions. It is the pan of live coals in the form of three kinds of miseries. It is an oblation offered to the crow in the form of death (136-140). It sustains misery, enhances fear of death and is a store - house of all kinds of unhappiness. It is the source of wicked thoughts, the fruit of bad actions and the perfect

embodiment of delusion. It is the basis of transmigration, the garden of passions, and the dish served for all diseases. It is the leftover food for death, or the beaten track of birth and death. It is the embodiment of delusion cast in the stuff of fancies and is, as it were, a cellar full of scorpions (141-145). It is the den of a tiger, friendship of a whore, the means of sensual enjoyment acceptable to all. It is like the sympathy of a female goblin, like the cooled drink of poison, have like feigned friendship of a polished thief. it is like the embrace of a leper, like the softness of a deadly serpent, or like the music played by a hunter to ensnare birds and animals. It is like the hospitality of an enemy, like the (outward) respect shown by wicked men, in short, the sea of all calamities. It is like a dream seen in sleep, like a forest grown on mirage water, or the sky fashioned out of particles of smoke (146-150). Those who have attained my infinite nature, will never be united with this body.

16. *Right from the realm of god Brahma, the worlds return again and again, O Arjuna; but after reaching Me, O son of Kanto, there is not more rebirth.*

    Now even for the swaggering Brahma, there is no escape from birth and death. But just as the dead man cannot buffer stomach-ache, or a person, after waking up, cannot get drowned in a flood which he dreamt in sleep, so those, who have attained to me, do not get smeared with the taint f worldly existence. Even for the eighth part of a day of Brahmaloka, which is the best among the worlds and the summit of the universe and which stands at the head of all durable things, the life of Indra does not last and fourteen Indras come and go in a Day of Brahma (151-155).

17. *Those who know that the Day of Brahma ends after a thousand epochs, and that the Night also does the same, are the knows of Day and Night.*

    The Day of Brahma lasts for four thousand epochs, and so does his Night. Those fortunate persons who live in this world having such Days and Nights do not return to this mortal world and enjoy a long life in heaven. What can one say about the longevity of other gods, when there are fourteen Indras in a Day of Brahmaloka? those who see with their eyes the Day and Night of Brahma, are called the knows of day and night.

18. *Form the Unmanifest all manifestations emerge at the coming of Brahma's Day; at the falling of Night they dissolve in that self-same thing called the Unmanifest.*
19. *And this multitude of beings comes into being again and again, and dissolves helplessly, O Partha, at the coming of the Night; it is born again at the advent of the Day.*

    When the day of Brahma dawns, then this Unmanifest a manifest itself as the universe (156-160). When the Day is over, this sea of name and form

dries up and when it dawns, it begins to take shape. At the beginning of autumn the clouds disappear in the sky, and at the end of summer, they begin to appear again. Likewise, at the start of the Brahma's day, their universe come into being and lasts until the end of four thousand yugas. Then when the night of Brahman starts, the universe becomes merged in the unmanifest and resumes its present form when the night-ends. My reason for telling you all this is that the origination and dissolution of the universe takes place in a day and night of the Brahma's world (161-165). See the measure of its greatness. It contains the seed of creation but becomes subject to recurrence. O Arjuna, this universe begins to expand at the beginning of the Day and then when the night comes, it begins to dissolve in its original state. Just as the tree is contained in the seed or the cloud dissolves in the sky, so that in which this manifold universe dissolves is known as the state of equilibrium.

20. *But higher than this Unmanifest, there is another being, Unmanifest and eternal, which, when all beings perish, does not perish.*

In this state of equilibrium, nothing does exist, nor can one say that similar or different things exist. Just as when milk turns into curds, it loses its name and form, so with the dissolution of its form the world disappears (166-170). But it continues to exist as it was before creation. This is known as Unmanifest; when it takes shape it becomes the manifest world; the one implies the otter and so they are not two different things. When the gold is melted, it is known as a bar of gold, but its bar form vanishes, when it is turned into ornaments. Just as these two modifications take place in gold, so the manifest world and the Unmanifest are the two forms of Brahman. But that Brahman is neither manifest nor umanifest, abiding forever. Brahman becomes the world, but does not perish with the world, just as the meaning is not lost when the letters are erased. Look, even when the waves come and go, water remains unaffected; so this Brahman retains its imperishable form, even when beings perish. Just as gold remains even when the ornaments are melted, so even when beings die, it remains immortal.

21. *It is called the eternal Unmanifest; they speak of it as the highest goal. After reaching it, they do not return; that is my supreme abode.*
22. *But that supreme person, O Partha, is attainable only through exclusive devotion. In Him all beings dwell and out of Him all this is moven.*

If we call it Unmanifest, we do not praise it properly; because it cannot be comprehended by the mind of the intellect. Even if it assumes form, it does not lose its formless nature. And with the disappearance of its form, its eternity is not affected (176-180). It is, therefore, called the imperishable, known as eternally present. Since there is nothing beyond it, it is the final destination of human life. but it is present in this body, as if

asleep, as it does not perform any function either itself or through others. However, all the activities of the body go on without stop, and the sense organs are free to go their own way. When the sense-objects are presented to the mind, a measure of pleasure and pain reaches it. When the king enjoys his sleep, the activities in his kingdom do not stop; and his subjects continue to do their work according t their desires (181-185). the decision - making by the intellect, the activities of the mind and the senses, and the flow of breathing-all these function of the body go one without any action on its part, just as the people go their way, without being moved by the sun. O Arjuna, since the self remains as if asleep in the body, he is called purusa. He is also known as purusa, as prakriti is his faithful wife. The Vedas do not enter even its courtyard, and it is so all-pervasive that it covers the sky (186-190). Knowing thus the great yogis call it the highest of all things, and it comes in search of the house of all things, and it comes in search of the house of one, for whom it is the sole resort. It presents to them who think of nothing else with body, speech and mind, a reward, like a fertile field, for their single-minded devotion. O son of Pandu, it is the hermitage for the believer, who sincerely believes this universe to be the form of the supreme self. It is the dignity of the humble, the knowledge of the gunatita and the kingdom of bliss for the desireless, the dish served to the contented, the asylum to the helpless, whose destination is reached through the royal road of devotion (191-195). O Arjuna, why should I waste my time in describing all this to you? When the self reaches that state, he becomes one with it. Just as hot water becomes cool when the cool breeze blows; or darkness becomes light when the sun rises, so when empirical existence reaches that abode, it turns into liberation. Just as when firewood is burnt in fire, no one can recover it again, or not even a clever person can change sugar again into sugarcane (196-200) or after iron is transformed into gold by the touch of philosopher's stone, the gold cannot be turned back into iron, or when ghee is made out of milk, it cannot be turned again into milk, so there is no return for a person who has reached that place. That place is truly My supreme abode; I m laying bare this inner secret of mine to you.

23. *Of that time wherein yogis depart to return again or never to return, of that I shall speak, O best of Bharatas.*

One can easily know where the yogis go after knowing the time when they leave their bodies. Sometimes it so happens that a yogi leaves at an improper time and then he has to become embodied again (201-205). Therefore, if he dies at an auspicious time, he becomes one with Brahman; but if he dies at an improper time, he returns to the mortal world. So return and non-return are both dependent on time. I shall now tell you incidentally the proper time for dying. Listen, O great warrior, when a person is overtaken with the stupor of death, the five great elements go their own way. Since he has put on the armour of the experience of god,

his intellect remains undeluded, his memory strong and his mind active. This whole sentient group remains fresh at the time of death (206-210). in order that this group remains alert and continues to be so till the time of death, he must receive the help of fire. O Partha, if the lamp is extinguished either by wind or water , will one be able to see anything, even if one's sighty remains intact? when the body is overtaken by an excess of wind and phlegm, the fire in the body loses its warmth at the time of death. When the prana has no life, what can the intellect do them? Therefore, consciousness does not remain in the body, without warmth. If the warmth leaves the body, it is only a lump of wet clay; he will then spend the rest of his life in darkness (211-215). Then how can he keep the remembrance of his previous yogic practice at that time and become one with the Brahman after death? At that time he loses his consciousness and all his remembrance, past and present, in the mire of phlegm. So all his yogic practice perishes even before death, just as the lamp is extinguished even before the treasure in found. In shout, know that knowledge is dependent on heat of the body; therefore, it is necessary to have the help of full warmth at the time of departure.

24. *Fire, light, daytime, the bright fortnight, the six months of the(sun's) Northern course departing by this path, the Brahman-knows go to Brahman.*

    When there is heat of fire in the body, the bright fortnight and the day outside, and anyone of the six months of the (sun's) northern course (216-220), the knows of Brahman who leave their body at such a propitious time, become one with Brahman. Know, o Arjuna, this occasion has such power that it is the royal road to reach the destination. Here the first step is fire, the second its flame, third is the day-time, the fourth the bright fortnight, the last step the six months in the northern course, going by which the yogis attain the state of liberation. This is the best time to depart, called the archer path. I shall now tell you the inauspicious time, listen (221-225).

25. *Smoke, night, the dark fortnight, the six months of the (sun's) Southern course - (departing) then, having reached the lunar light, the yogi reruns (to the mortal world.)*

    If at the time of departure wind and phlegm become excessive, then the mind becomes enveloped in darkness. Then the senses become inert, remembrance becomes confused, the mind becomes benumbed and the prana becomes suffocated. The fire loses its blaze and remains as smoke only, by which the consciousness of the body becomes engulfed. When the moon is hidden by the could there is dim light and semi-darkness. He is neither dead nor fully alive and his life, being arrested, stands on the brink of death (226-230). Thus, when the senses, mind and intellect

become engulfed by smoke, the yoga achieved by life-long effort is destroyed. When what is in hand is lost, then what hope is there to achieve something new? This is his condition when he departs from this world. while this is his internal condition, externally there is the night, the dark fortnight and a day in the six months of the sun's southern course. When there is a concatenation of such things at the time of death, how will he get the glimpse of self-realization? when a yogi leaves his body at this time, he goes to the region of the moon, but returns from there to this mortal world (231-235). This, O Arjuna, is what I call the improper time. By taking the path of smoke one gets involved in the recurrence of birth. The other one is the Archira path, which is easy, naturally good and conducive to happiness and release.

26. *For these two, the bright and the dark, are the eternal paths of the world. By one a person does not return, by the other he returns.*

I have shown you these two eternal paths intentionally; one is a straight path, the other is a bypath. You should then know which is the right and which is the wrong path, what will do you good and what will cause you harm, so that you will adopt the good. If a person sees a boat, will he jump into deep water or knowing the straight road, will anyone take to a bypath (236-240)? As a person who knows poison and nectar, will not give up nectar, so a person who knows the straight path will not choose the bypath. One should carefully examine what in true and what is false, so that one does not come to harm when the occasion arises. otherwise, if there is confusion between the paths, one may come to evil, and then all the life-long spiritual practices will come to nougat. If a person, missing the path of light, goes by the path of smoke, he will be bound to the worldly existence and roam from birth to birth. In order to enable a person to escape these travail of life, I had to disclose to you these two paths of yoga (241-245). One of them leads to God-realization, the other to transmigration. But either of these two paths falls to one's lot at the time of death.

27. *Knowing these two paths, O Partha, the yogi in not deluded, therefore, at all times, O Arjuna, remain engrossed in yoga.*

But how can one be sure by which path one will go after death? why should one depend upon the right path for god-realization? Whether one remains in body or departs, one is of the nature of Brahman. Because even if a rope appears like a serpent, it is really a rope. Is the water ever aware like a serpent, it is really a rope. Is the water ever aware of the ripples, which come and go? it ever remains at any time with or without ripples as water only. Therefore, those who have become Brahman while living are known as disembodied (246-250).

There does not remain now even a trace of body-consciousness in him; then how can he die at any time? Why, then, should he search for any path and where can he go, when space and time have become his very self? Look, when the jar breaks, has the space outside? Wills it otherwise miss it? The truth is that when the jar breaks, only its form is lost; but the space inside it has always been part of the space outside. With this knowledge. The yogi who has attained to oneness with Brahman, does not bother which path he should take (151-155). For this reason, O Arjuna, I urge you to become possessed of yoga, by which you will acquire equanimity at all times. Whether his bondage to the body remains or goes, his free and eternal unity with Brahman remains unaffected. He is not born at the beginning of the epoch nor dies at the end of it, nor is he tempted by the pleasures of heaven or earth. He who has attained to this knowledge properly becomes a yogi who, discarding the pleasures of life, has attained his self, he abandons, O Arjuna, as worthless the lordship of Indra and other gods, which receives acclaim everywhere (256-260).

28. *Whatever reward the Vedas assign to ritual, austerities and almsgiving, the yogi knowingly transcends them all and attains the supreme primal state.*

Whatever fruit is attained by studying the Vedas or by performing yoga or by practicing austerities, or by giving in charity, even if it is done in abundance, it does not bear comparison with the pure bliss, it does not seem less. Since it does not wilt or come to an end and gives full satisfaction, it appears to the ignorant to have kinship with the supreme bliss. Even though this joy of heaven is sensual, it depends on providence and so cannot be acquired by performing even hundred sacrifices (261-265). When the great yogi, by his keen and extraordinary insight, weighs it attaints bliss, he finds it trifling. Then, O Arjuna, by making this heavenly joy his footstep, he mounts the seat of the supreme Brahman. Thus, spoke to Arjuna, lord Krishna, the glory of the yadu race, who is the destiny of moving and non-moving beings, the object of worship of Shankara and Brahma, the treasure enjoyed by the yogis, the promoter of all arts, the supreme bill in human form, the sap of the universe and the source of all knowledge (266-270) So Sanjaya gave to king Dhritarashtra the news of kurukshetra. Shri Jnanadeva says, listen to the events that followed (271).

Chapter Ninth

THE ESOTERIC KNOWLEDGE

Kindly pay attention to me; then you will become deserving of great bliss. I promise this, please give heed. I do not speak this out of pride, but I am entreating you out of affection in this audience of all-knowing persons to listen to me. Since I have rich parents like you, I am assured of the fulfillment of all my fond wishes and desires. The arbors of bliss are blooming through the coolness shed by your glances and tired that I am, I am resting under full-grown cool shade of your grace. O saints, you are a pool of nectar-like happiness, from which we receive moisture of your grace, as we desire. If I feel shy of entreating you, how shall I get peace of mind (1-5)? When the child begins to lisp or walk with a limping gate, the mother admires it and become delighted. I am soliciting your favor with great ardor, so that I can receive the affection of holy men like you. Compared to my ability to speak, listeners are all - knowing. It is like teaching a child of the Goddess of learning to write on a slate. How can the glow-worm, however big, show itself off before the sun? What dishes can you serve along with nectar? Who will fan the moon to keep her cool or sing before the unmanifested sound or adorn the ornaments (6-10)? What should the fragrance smell, where should the sea bathe, and where can the *akasha* find shelter with its big expanse? Who has got the eloquence, which will arrest your attention, and make you say with joy 'What a fine discourse! But can one not wave the wick light before the sun, which illumines the world, or offer a handful of water as an oblation to the sea? O saints poor that I am, I offer my homage of words to you, who are images of Lord Shankara and request you to accept them as *nirgudi* leaves. When the child picks up food from its father's dish to feed him, the father willingly moves his mouth forward to have it from its hand (11-15). If I, therefore, take a little liberty with you out of childlike innocence, I hope you will bear it willingly out of affection. Since you bear me great affection and have accepted me as one of you, you will not feel the burden of my intimacy. When the calf pulls at the udder of its mother, the cow releases more milk, just so love gets and impetus from the anger of a beloved person.

Since I know that I have awakened your dormant grace by my childish prattle, I am emboldened to explain the Gita to you. Else has anyone been able to ripen moonlight under pressure, to give speed to the wind, or to cover up the sky (16-20)? As water cannot be diluted or butter churned, so my discourse feels shy of interpreting the Gita and turns back. What ability has I to explain in the local language the meaning of the Gita, which has eluded the words and baffled the Vedas? But I have made bold to do this in the hope that I shall endear myself to you by this courageous act. Now

fulfil my desire by giving your attention, which cools like the moonlight and enlivens one like nectar. If your glance showers its grace upon me, then my intellect will reap an abundant harvest of the meaning of the Gita. But if you are indifferent, it will wither away the sprout of my knowledge (21-25). Please bear in mind that if you feed my eloquence with your attention, then my words will be able to bear the burden of explaining the doctrines of the Gita. Meaning will wait for the words to come out to leave its impress and intellect will flower into meaningful interpretation of the Gita. If there is perfect accord between the speaker and the audience, the mind becomes overfull with sentiments, and if the listeners do not pay attention, the sentiments get dried up. The moonstone oozes only with its contact with the moonlight; so the speaker cannot prove his worth without an audience. Does the cooked rice need to entreat the eater to relish it or must the puppets implore the thread-puller to make them dance (26-30)? The puppeteer makes them dance not for their sake, but to show his skill. But why should I bother about this? Then the Guru said, "Why do you say all this? We can read your thoughts. Now continue the story". Then Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivritti, said with pleasure. And enthusiasm, "As you wish, My Master; I shall tell you what Lord Krishna said, please listen.

The blessed Lord said:

1. To you unavailing, I shall declare this most profound wisdom, together with knowledge, knowing which you shall be freed from evil.

   O Arjuna, I am going to tell you now the seed of wisdom, which is the innermost secret of my heart. You wonder why I should open my heart before you and tell you all this (31-35), then listen, O wise one, you are the very image of faith, and will not disregard what I have to tell you. Therefore, I do not mind revealing to you the secret and saying what I ought not to say; but I feel that I should convey to your mind what is in my heart. O Partha the teat does not taste the milk which is concealed in it; it only satisfied the calf which wants to drink it with a single-minded love. If the seed is sown in a properly ploughed land, can you say that it is completely lost? So one should freely tell one's secret to a person who has a pure mind and refined intellect, who does not cavil at others and is solely devoted to me (36-40). There is not one else, who possesses these virtues so well as yourself; and, therefore, I feel that I should not withhold this secret from you. Now you must be fed up with this constant talk of secret; so I shall disclose to you this wisdom along with empirical knowledge. If genuine and counterfeit coins are mixed together, they can be determined by the application of appropriate tests. Just as a swan can separate the milk and water with its beak, so I shall distinguish between self-knowledge and phenomenal knowledge. Even as the husk is separated by a strong wind, piling a heap of grain on the ground (41-45),

so this wisdom, equating mortal life with the world of name and form leads the spiritual aspirant to the state of liberation.

2. *This is the royal wisdom, the royal mystery, the best and most purifying, capable of direct perception, conforming to duty, very easy to practice and undecaying.*

   This wisdom has achieved the highest status among knowledge, and is the sovereign among all secrets, the purest of all pure things. It is the basis of righteousness; the best among the best and it leaves no scope for further rebirth. It is ever present in the heart of every one and comes to him easily as soon as he hears it from the mouth of the spiritual teacher. One can attain this wisdom by easy steps, and when it is attained, all experience comes to an end (46-50). Its realization, which is easy to achieve even on this shore of life, fills the heart with great happiness. Another characteristic of this wisdom is that once it is attained, it is not lost, and even if one experiences it, it does not diminish or wilt. If you reason it out and raising a doubt ask, "how has such an entity been ignored by the people? How is it that those who do not hesitate to jump into fire to earn interest at one percent per menses on their investment, have been negligent, easily attainable and is in accord with one's duty and conducive to liberation (51-55). If this is so full of bliss, how is it that people have overlooked it?" If such a doubt enters your mind, do not entertain it.

3. *Men lacking in faith in this way of knowledge, O scorcher of foes, return to the path of the mortal world without attaining to me.*

   O Arjuna, the udder of the cow contains milk, pure and tasty; but don't the ticks ignore it and drink pure blood? The lotus-root and the frog live at the same place, but the bee enjoys its pollen, while the frog is left with mud. An unlucky person may have is his mouse chests full of good coins unknown to him, but he lives a life of penury. Likewise, though I, the fountain of bliss, abide in him, a person deluded by the sense-object hankers after them (56-60). This is like running after a mirage after spitting out nectar, or like throwing away the philosopher's stone after finding a shell. Thus in the hurry and scurry of egoistic activity, these wretches do not reach me and roll in pain on the banks of birth and death. If you ask me that I am, I am like the sun always facing you, but I do not share his deficiency of being visible and invisible at times.

4. *All this world is pervaded by Me in My unmanifest form; all beings exist in Me, but I do not exist in them.*

   As regards my expansion, am I not this whole universe? Just as when the milk coagulates, it becomes curds, or the seed is transformed into the tree

or the gold into ornaments, so this whole universe is nothing but my expanse (61-65). When my unmanifest nature becomes frozen, it takes the form of the universe, and thus I, who am unmanifest, have expanded into these three worlds. All beings from the great principle to the bodies appear on me as foam appears on water. But o Arjuna, there is not water in that foam nor do we see the manifold objects of the dream after waking. So even though these beings appear in me, I am not in them. I have already given you this elucidation before (VII. 12). But let us stop here, as I do not wish to repeat what I have said before; but I want you to have an insight into my essential nature (66-70).

5. *Nor do beings dwell in me; behold my divine yoga. Though I do not exist in them, I give them being and sustain them,*

   If you wish to see, without misconception, my reran nature beyond the *prakriti,* you will realize that the statement that the being are in me is false; because I am all this. because in the twilight of the divine will, the mind's eye becomes dim, and in that dim light although I am one, I appear to be different beings. When the dim light of that will comes to an end I appear in my true nature, as the garland, which appeared like the serpent, is seen in its true form. Else do the pitcher, pot etc. happen of their own accord? They are really fashioned by the intellect of the potter or are their mines of waves in the water of the sea? Is it not truly the work of the wind which blows on the water? So also are there bundles of cloth contained in the bales of cotton? The cotton has itself become cloth in the eyes of its wearer. When gold is turned into ornaments, it is not destroyed; it assumes the form of ornaments in the eyes of their user. The echo of the sound that we hear or the reflection in the mirror that we see is that of a real object that exists. So when a person superimposes the beings on my pure nature this superimposition is entirely due to a misconception born of Maya. When this misconception ceases, the superimposition comes to an end, and then my pure nature without form remains (76-80). Just as a giddy person thinks that the surrounding objects are revolving around him, so the beings appear as superimposition's on my indivisible nature. When this misconception ceases, no one can imagine even in a dream, that I exist in the beings or that the beings esist in Me. So to say that I support the beings or that I exist in the beings is like the raving of a person suffering from delirious fever. Thus it is the misconception of an unreal being that makes one think that I am the core of this universe or the support of the beings Just as one sees the non existent mirage due to the sun's rays, he thinks that I exist in the beings and the beings exist in Me. But even as the sun and his light are one and the same, so I do not exist apart from the beings. Do you see, O Arjuna, this My divine power? Tell me, do you see any distinction between Me and the beings? Thus the world is not really different from Me, and so do not ever think that I am different from them.

6. *Nor do these works of creation bind Me, O Arjuna, since I remain like one indifferent, detached from these actions.*

   Just as a mound of salt cannot stop a rushing mass or river water, so even if the works of creation ultimately merge in me, they do not blind me. How can a cage of smoke stop a blast of wind or darkness enters the sun's disc (121-125). If a torrential rain could drench things in the bosom of a mountain, then actions of *prakriti,* I remain indifferent, not doing anything or making others do it. just as a lamp kipt in the house does not know who is doing what in the house, but is a mere witness to the work which goes on in the house, so although I remain in the beings, I am unconcerned about their works. in how many ways can I elucidate the same thing again and again? But, o Arjuna, keep this in mind (126-130).

7. *With me presiding over her, prakriti begets the moving and stationary things; for this reason, o son of Kunti, the world revolves.*

   Just as the sun in merely the instrumental cause of the world's affairs, so I am, O Arjuna, the cause of creation of the world. Since under my superintendence the *prakriti* creates this world, I am said to be the cause of it. Now if you look at my divine yoga in the light of this knowledge, you will know that neither I am in neither these beings, nor they in me. I am disclosing to you this secret of mine, which you should experience in your heart, by shutting the doors of the senses (131-135). Unless you know this secret, you will not realize my real nature like grain in a heap of husk. people think that they can understand me with the aid of reasoning, but can the earth become soft with the water of a mirage? The moon's reflection appears to be caught in a fisherman's net in the sea, but when the net is brought to the shore and shaken, where is the reflection? So some persons, on the strength of the words and utterances, pretend that they have attained self-realization; but when they are put to the test, they realize that they have not attained it nor are they likely to attain it in future.

8. *Fools scoff at me who have taken the human form, not knowing my higher nature as the great lord of beings does.*

   In short, if you are afraid of life and really fond of me, then you should keep this conclusion in your mind (136-140). To one who suffers from jaundice, the moonlight appears to be yellow; so people see defect in my pure nature. To one who has a bad mouth due to fever, even milk taste bitter. in the same way people think me to be human, although I am divine. Therefore, O Arjuna, I am repeatedly telling you not to forget this secret. There is no point in seeing me with the gross physical eyes, he does not see the real me at all, just as one does not become immortal by drinking nectar in a dream. Since the deluded persons know me with their physical eyes their imperfect knowledge comes in the way of true knowledge (141-

145), in the same way as the swan who, thinking the reflections of stars in water as gems, jumps to pick them up and dashing against a rock dies. What use is it to run after a mirage thinking it to be river Ganga or to resort to a babul tree thinking it to be the wish-yielding tree or to pick up a poisonous serpent thinking it to be a necklace of emeralds or to gather flints thinking them to be diamonds, or to collect live coals thinking them to be hidden treasure, or for a lion to jump into the well, thinking his own reflection in the water to be another lion? Thus those who, thinking me to be human, become absorbed in worldly life with great resolve, have caught hold of the moon's reflection instead of the noon (146-150). Their resolve is worthless like that of a person who drinks gruel instead of nectar and expects to become immortal. So how can they know my truly imperishable nature, if they think me to possess a gross perishable form? How can a person reach the shore of the Western Sea by going? O great warrior, how can a person recover grain by pounding bran ? How can one come to know me by knowing this ever-chaining world? Can one quench his thirst by drinking the foam of water? But because their mind is deluded, they think me human and attribute to me birth and work which do not at all affect me (151-155).

Although I am without name, actionless and without body, they ascribe to me name, actions and physical activities. To me who am devoid of form, limiting adjuncts and injunction, they attribute to me form, offer me worship and perform ceremonial rites. Although I am devoid oc caste and qualities and without legs and hands they ascribe to me caste, qualities, legs and hands. Though I am limitless and all - pervading, they attribute limitations and location to me. Just as a man in sleep dreams of a forest, he sees me as having ears, eyes, lineage and form although I never had any of them (156-160). Although I am unmanifest, desireless and self-contented, they imagine in me manifestation, desires and contentment. Though I am without clothes and ornaments, they dress me in clothes and ornaments; and they try to discover my origin, although I am the source of all. Though I am self-established, they make images of me, and though I am self-existent, they consecrate my idol, and though I am eternal, I am subjected to invocation and immersion. Although I am self-evident and formless, they conceive me as having childhood, youth and old age. although I am non-dual, they attribute duality to me, and they think me to be the agent and experience, though I am not so (161-165). Though I have no family, they conceive of my family and describe it and though I am eternal, they imagine that I have died and grieve over it. They conceive me, who abide in the heart of all, as somebody's friend or enemy, though I am full of bliss, they think me desirous of pleasures; and though I am everywhere, they think that I reside in one place. Though I am the self of the animate and inanimate world, they tell everyone that I show partiality to some and destroy other in anger. in fact they ascribe to me all human attributes and so possess country knowledge about me. they worship an idol, thinking

that to be myself, and when it is broken, throw it away without remorse (166-170). In many ways they conceive me to be of human form and because of this they remain ignorant about my real nature.

9. *With vain hopes, with vain works and with vain knowledge and without sense; they take to delusive natures of fiends and demons.*

   Because of this misconception which they have about me, their birth is in vain like clouds outside or the rainy season, or like the waves of the mirage, fit to be seen only from a distance, or like a horseman made of clay, like magical ornaments or like the empty space in an imaginary city in the sky or like the silk-cotton tree, which is fruitless and hollow though full-grown, or like the neck-nipple of a she-goat. Vain is the life and work of such a fool, like the fruit of the silk-cotton tree, which no one gives or takes (171-175). Then whatever knowledge they acquire is like the coconuts cut by monkeys or like a pearl in the hand of a blind man. Their scriptures are as uselessness weapons in the hands of maidens, or like the mystical letters of a *mantra* told to an impure person. Hence whatever they know or whatever they do, o Arjuna, becomes worthless as they lack true knowledge. They have come under the sway of the demoness in the form of *tamas, which* destroys their good intelligence and discriminating knowledge. As they have fallen in the mouth of the tamas demoness, their minds split into smithereens (176-180). The murderous tongue of this demoness, licking the lips and extending upto the ears, wallows in the saliva of hope and it chew constantly the meatballs of discontent. This demoness roams intoxicated in the valley of heedlessness. Her teeth in the form of hatred crushes knowledge and she envelops the intelligence as the water-jar-covered sage Agastya. Those who fall a prey to this demoniacal disposition sink in the pool in the form of mental delusion. in this way those who fall in the pit of *tamas* do not get the helping hand of knowledge and they go one know not where (181-185). But why this useless talk about these fools? It will only tire out speech and lead up nowhere. When the lord said this, Arjuna readily assented. the lord said "now listen to the story of the devotees, in which speech finds rest".

10. *But the great souls, O Partha, who partake of divine nature, worship me with undivided attain, regarding me as the immutable source of beings.*

    I dwell in the pure heart (or a devote) like an ascetic at a holy place. Dispassion does not leave him even in sleep. Righteousness regains in his good thoughts and desires and his mind always nourishes discriminating knowledge. Bathing in the river of knowledge, he has attained perfection and he looks like the foliage on the tree of ever-lasting peace (186-190), or the blossoms of the supreme spirit, or a pillar in the pavilion of fortitude, or an overfull jar dipped in the ocean of bliss. He has attained such ecstasy of devotion that he turns always from liberation and

his natural conduct is full of morality. All his senses are filled with perfect peace and his mind has, as it were, wrapped up by my all-pervading being. Such high-soulless persons, possessed of divine endowment, fully comprehend my divine nature, and they worship me with great devotional love, without being touched by any sense of duality (191-195). O Arjuna, thus becoming one with me, they serve me, I shall tell you the novelty of their devotion, please listen.

11. *These devotees dance in ecstasy while singing my praise, making all acts of expiation superfluous, as in them no trace of sin is left.*

    In the case of such devotees, control of the senses and mind become redundant, the holy places become desolate, and the activities of the hell come to stop. Self-control does not know whom to control, self-restraint does not know whom to restrain and the holy waters do not find even a trace of sin to cleanse. Thus by loudly singing my name, my devotes heal the miseries of all beings and make the whole world resound with bliss (196-200). They give light without dawn, eternal life without nectar and God's vision without yogic practice. they do not discriminate between the prince and the pauper or the high and the low, and they open the kingdom of heaven to all creatures. one rarely goes to vaikuntha, but by flooding the world with God's name, these devotees have made this world a veritable Vaikuntha (abode of Lord Vishnu). The sun shines bright, but has the defect that he sets; the moon is full at times, but my devotees are always perfect. The clouds are generous but they too become empty, so their simile is not apt. My devotees are without doubt like the merciful lord Shiva (201-205). People have to serve me in thousand births to be able to utter my name even once; but my name dances on their tongue to their great joy. I am, therefore, not to be found in Vaikuntha or in the sun's disc; I even pass the minds of those who practice yoga. O Arjuna, I am positively to be found in the home of my devotees, who constantly sing my praise in a loud voice. Enwrapped in singing my virtues, they forget the time and place and become absorbed in the bliss through my kirtana. Through the constant utterance of my name, Krishna, Vishnu, Hari, Govinda and the open discourse on my divine essence, they abundantly sing my praise (206-210) and roam all over the world, singing hosannas to me.

    Then there are others, O Arjuna, who, with great care attains complete mastery over the mind and the five vital airs. Hedging in the external senses with the aid of yama and niyama, they set up on the rampart of diamond pose and fire the guns of breath-control. Then in the light of the serpent power, and with the aid of mind and the breath, the lake of nectar becomes tilted on one side. The restraint of the senses then shows its mettle by withdrawing the senses in the heart and putting an end to mental disorders (211-215). Then the yogi rides on the horse of meditation,

destroying the five great elements together with the fourfold source of volition. Then he raises the cry of victory, accompanied by the beating of the drums of meditation, and the shining parasol of union with Brahman is unfurled over his head. After attaining the excellence of uninterrupted deep contemplation, he experiences the bliss of self-realization and is crowned on the throne of spiritual enlightenment. O Arjuna some worship me with this difficult eight-fold yoga.

Now I shall tell you how some other devotees worship me. they know that I pervade this world, animate as well as inanimate, just as yarn pervades cloth from end to end (216-220). They see me in all beings right form lord Brahma to a gnat and without discriminating between beings as great or small, sentient or insentient, they bow before them with great devotion, forgetting their own greatness. They like to prostrate themselves before all creatures without any thought as to whether they are worthy of it or not. Just as water fallen from a height flows down to the bottom, they bow before all beings as if it has become second nature with them. just as the branches of trees laden with fruit bend low almost touching the ground, they bow down their heads before all creatures (221-225). They are ever without self-conceit, humility is their wealth, and they offer this wealth to me with the cry, "Glory to you, O lord". Because of this humility they lose all sense of honor and dishonor, they become one with me and worship me constantly. O Arjuna, I have told you so far about ardent devotion.

Now I shall tell you about those who worship me with knowledge-sacrifice. O Arjuna, the manner in which they worship me I have already described to you before. To this Arjuna said, "Yes, I have received this divine grace before. Gut when a dish of nectar is served, who will say I have had enough of it (226-230)?" On hearing these words, lord Krishna knew that Arjuna was eager to know about it and was rocking to and for with the bliss of knowledge. He said, "Well, O Partha, in view of your eagerness I must repeat to you what I have said before, though this is not the proper occasion for it". Then Arjuna said, "o lord, is the moon-light meant only for the chakora bird? Nay, it is the moon's nature to cool down the whole world. just as the chakora bird turns the beak towards the moon in supplication, I am making this small request to you. O lord, you are the ocean of mercy. The cloud out of its munificence satisfies the thirst of the world. Otherwise as against his downpour how insignificant is the thirst of chakora bird (231-235).! But even for the sake of a mouthful of water one has to go to the river Ganga; so you have to satisfy my desire, whether it is large or small. Then the lord said, "Enough of this talk. I am thoroughly pleased. I am not able to bear any further compliments from you. The attention with which you listen is enough encouragement to me". Commending Arjuna's speech thus, lord Krishna began to speak :

12. *Others also worship me with the sacrifice of knowledge, as one and separately as the manifold, with face on every side.*

In this knowledge-sacrifice, the original desire of Brahman to be many is the sacrificial post to which the animal is tied. The gross elements form the sacrificial pavilion and the sense of duality is the animal to be sacrificed. The qualities of the five gross elements and the senses and the prana are the very materials of sacrifice and ignorance is the ghee to be offered as oblation (236-240). The mind and the intellect are the sacrificial pits in which the fire is kindled and equanimity is the altar. The power to grasp discriminating thought constitutes the lofty Vedic hymns, tranquility the sacrificial ladle, and the embodied self-the sacrifice. The latter performs knowledge-sacrifice with the vessels of experience, and by chanting the Vedic hymns of discrimination, destroys duality. When the ignorance comes to an end, neither the sacrifice nor the sacrifice remains and he performs the final ablution in the form of union with the self. Then he comes to know with intuitive knowledge of the self that the elements, senses and sense-objects are not different but forms one whole (241-245). O Arjuna, on waking up a person says, " I had myself become under the influence of sleep the wonderful army in the dream; the dream was all a delusion, and there was nothing but myself' and in the same way he comes to realize that he is all this world. Then all talk about the existence of separate being ends, and his mind becomes full with the unitary experience of Brahman. Thus some worship me with knowledge0sacrifice culminating in the vision of unity. there are others who grant that there are separate but similar beings, who sesame different due to their assumption of name and form. This plurality of the world, however, does not affect his unity of knowledge. just as the limbs, although different, belong to the same body (246-250), or the branches, big and small, belong to the same tree, or the many rays are, all of them, of one and the same sun, they know that I am the supreme unity underlying these different beings, who have assumed diverse names and forms. So, O Arjuna, even though they do believe in the diversity of the wo9rld, they still perform the supreme knowledge-sacrifice. in their wisdom they keep the knowledge of unity intact, because wherever they cast their eyes, they see nothing except myself, see wherever the bubble floats, it is always in water and whether it stays or bursts, it remains in water (251-255). When particles of dust are raised by air, they do not cease to be earthy; and when they fall down they fall and merge in earth only. So wherever a thing with name and form exist or ceases to exist, it is always of the same nature as Brahman. I am ever all pervading, so is their experience. Therefore, even if they are different as individual beings, they remain in union with everyone, they also remain facing the world without let or hindrance. Their knowledge emails the same. Whether this or that side, justs as the wind blows here, there and everywhere (256-260). Their existence measures up to my being, which is entire and whole, and, therefore, without any effort on their part, they

worship me. Since I pervade everything, can anyone ever cease to worship me? But since they lack true knowledge, they fail to reach me. I have thus told you how they worship me with knowledge-sacrifice. All creatures are done automatically dedicate to me; but the fools do not attain to me for want of knowledge.

13. *I am the Vedic rite, I am the sacrifice, the ancestral libation and the herb. I am the sacred formula, the clarified burger, the sacred fire, and the offering.*

    When the knowledge dawns on him, he realizes that I am the Vedas; and I am the rite which are enjoined by them (261-265). I am also sacrifice, which springs, o son of pandu, from the performance of the prescribed rites. I am the offering made to the gods, also to the manes, I am also the soma and other plants, the clarified butter and the fire-sticks. I am the Vedic hymns, the oblations, and the presiding priest. I am the sacrificial fire and all the things required for the sacrifice.

14. *I am the father of this universe, the another, the supporter, the grand-sire; they holy object of knowledge, the syllable Om and the Rik, Saman and Yajus.*

    I am the gather of world, as under my inspiration this eightfold prakriti gives rice to this entire creation. since the image of Shiva is half male and half female, I am also the mother of this animate and inanimate world (266-270). And that which supports the world and promotes life cannot be any other than myself. since both prakriti and purusha have emerged from my unconscious mind, I am the grand-sire of all three worlds, I am also the knowable, the meeting place of the four Veda, in whose sacred abode the different paths leading to knowledge meet, where the4 different sects some to an understanding, where the different shastras come to know one another, where the dicvrgent paths of knowledge coalesce, and which is, therefore, called holy. I am also that Omkara, Primeval sound, which has sprouted from the seed of the sacred temple of the manifestation of the Brahman (271-275). I am also also the three letters a, u, m, which emerged from the womb of the Omkara and which gave birth to the three Vedas. I am, therefore, the three Vedas, the Rigveda, the Yajurveda and the Samaveda, and the source of all traditions of spiritual knowledge.

15. *I am the goal, the protector, lord and witness, the abode, refuge and friend; I am the origin, dissolution and support, the resting place ans. the eternal seed.*

    I am the supreme goal where rests the prakriti in which is store this world, both animate and inanimate, I am that by which the prakriti lives and by presiding over which I enjoy its qualities, O Arjuna. I am the lord of the

cosmic creation and the master of all the three worlds (276-280). it is by my cannoned that the sky spreads out every where, the wind blows unceasingly, the fire burns and the rains come. it is by my command that the mountains do not stir from their sites, the seas do not cross their limits, and the earth bears the creatures. It is because of me that the Vedas speak and the sun moves, the prana stirs and sets the world in motion. It is under my direction that the god of death destroys the world; and so, o son of pandu, all things happens as I command. I am the omnipotent lord of the universe and I am the witness of everything such as akasha (281-285). I pervade and support this universe of name and form. Just as water gives rise to ripples and fills them,, I support this entire universe and abide in it. I free my devotees from the bondage of birth and death, and am the refuge of those who have surrendered themselves to me. Although one, I assume manifold forms through the qualities of prakriti and I abide as the life of the universe. Just as the sun becomes reflected equally in a sea or a pond, I am the friend of all creatures including Brahma (286-290). I am O Pandava, the fountain of vitality of the universe, the root-cause of the creation and destruction of the world. The seed; so this universe is created from my will and become totally reabsorbed into it. I am the abode of this will, where the seed of the universe rests in the form of latent impressions at the end of the cycle. then the name and form as also classes and individuals, all caste-distinctions cease to exist along with all caste-distinctions cease to exist along with all forms. I am the treasure-house where this everlasting primeval will, desires and latent impressions retire, ready to burst forth in the next creation (291-295)

16. *I give heat and hold back rain and send it forth. I am immortality and death, as also being and non-being. O Arjuna.*

    When I heat up the world as sun it dries up, and when I send showers as Indra, it is flooded. When the fire consumes fuel, the latter becomes fire, and so the one who is killed and the killer are of my very nature. Whatever is mortal in this world is also my form, and that which is immortal is indeed my being. Without being prolix, I shall say it in a nutshell, that I am both what is manifest and what is unmanifest; therefore, o Arjuna, is there any place where I am not? It is indeed a pity that creatures are unlucky and fail to see me (296-300). Is it nor surprising that just as the waves should dry up without water and sun's rays cannot be seen without a lamp, my very forms should not recognise me. I fill this world in and out, which is all my being, but fate comes in the way of mortals and makes them blind towards me. If one who has fallen into a well of nectar wants to be taken out of it, what can you do about such an ill-starred person? Just as a blind person, running in search of food, stumbles upon a philosopher's stone and kicks it away, such indeed is the lot of persons who give up wisdom. So whatever actions they do without wisdom are not worth the name (301-305). Of

what avail are wings of eagle if they are given to a blind man? So good actions not based on wisdom are only wasted effort.

17. *The knowers of the three vedas, who by drinking soma are purified of sins, worship me with sacrifices and pray for heaven. Reaching the holy world of the king of gods (Indra), they enjoy in heaven all celestial pleasures.*

    O arjuna, the Vedic scholars worship me with sacrifices according to their stage of life and provide the standard of performing them. The Vedas nod with approval at the sacrificial rites performed by them; and the fruit of such rites presents itself before them. Such sacrifices who drink soma become themselves sacrifice incarnate; but know that they have accumulated sin, falsely know as merit. Because, after studying the three Vedas and performing hundreds of sacrifices, they prefer heaven to me, who am the goal of such sacrifices (306-310). This is like the unlucky person who sits under a wish-fulfilling tree and, knotting his cloth into a wallet, goes out begging in penury. If after offering me hundred sacrifices they long for heaven, how can you call it merit? It is sin and nothing else. To attain heaven without me hundred sacrifices they long for heaven, how can you call it merit? It is sin and nothing else. To attain heaven without me is the meritorious path for the ignorant. The wise, however, regard it as an impediment, leading to a fall. Heavenly life, no doubt, is reckoned as full of happiness, when compared with life in hell, but everlasting and faultless bliss ensues only from me. On the way to my abode, o great warrior, there are two bypaths of way layers which lead to heaven and hell (311-315). One leads to heaven through sin mixed sin. But pure merit alone brings the embodied self to me. How is it that the tongue does not fall, which praises any action as meritorious even when it leads men astray from my divine nature, though they are rooted in it? But enough of this. I shall now turn to the main theme.

    In this way, these sacrifices worship me seeking celestial pleasures. Then on the strength of rituals which do not lead to me, and which are, therefore, sinful, they go to heaven where they have immortality as their throne, the elephant airavata to ride upon and the metropolis of amaravati to dwell in (316-320). There they have treasures of occult powers, cellars of nectar and cow-pens containing heards of with – yielding cows, where deities stand in attendance upon them and, where the roads are paved with philosophers' stones, where the pleasure-gardens abound in with-yielding trees, where the gandsharvas sing, celestial dancers like Rambha dance and divine numphs like Urvashi attend on their pleasure, where the god of love serves them in their bed-chamber, the moon sprinkles water in the courtyard and they have messengers as swift as the wind, where there are priests like Brihaspati as their house-priests to give blessings, and many gods as bards (321-325), where stand in a row guardians of the world and where there are expert cavaliers and the caparisoned horse,

Uchchaishravas. The sacrificers in this way injoy the highest pleasures as of indra. This enjoyment, however, lasts so long as they have a little merit lift to their credit.

18. *Having enjoyed that vast heavenly world, with their merit exhausted they enter this mortal world. Thus by following the duties prescribed by the three vedas and cracing enjoymens, they go (to heaven and come back.)*

    No sooner is their merit exhausted, their heavenly joy comes to an end and they start coming back to the mortal world. When a person has squandered his last penny on a whore, he is not permitted by her even to tap her door. Such indeed is the pitiable plight of these sacrificers. Thus those who craved for heavenly enoyments were lost to me, who am eternal bliss. Their ascent to the immortal world becomes fruitless, as they have to return to the mortal world in the end (326-330). Born and baked in the mother's wombs full of muck for a period of nine months, they are born over and over again and die. As one gains a treasure in a dream which vanishes when he wakes up, so ephemeral is the heavenly joy of these sacrificers. O arjuna, even a master of the vedic lore lives an empty life like the chaff which is hollow and without the grain,. So all these rites prescribed by the three vedas are utterly worthless without me. Even if you know naught but me, you will enjoy eternal bliss.

19. *But as for men who worship me, thinking of me alone and none else, to them ever absorbed in me I grant yoga and eternal bliss.*

    There are others, however, who dedicate their heart and soul to me, without stirring into action like the fetus in the womb (231-235). They do not hold anything dearer than me and they have dedicated their whole life to me. Those who remember me with such exclusive devotion and worship, I too become their willing servant. When they begin to follow my path of devotion, it becomes incumbent upon me to care for them and to perform the tasks which they wish to be done. Just as a bird-mother lives to take care of its chicks without wings, or a mother exerts herself for the sake of the child unmindful of her own comfort, so I provide for those who have devoted their lives to me (336-340). If they crave for union with me, I fulfil their desire; and if they wish to serve me, I vouchsafe to them deep love for me. In this way I provide for them whatever they desire and also preserve for them whatever they have got. As regards those who have taken refuge in me, their well – being becomes my chief concern.

20. *As for the devotees who worship other deities with faith, they too worship me, o arjuna, though contrary to the rule.*

    But there are other who, without realising my all-pervading nature, offer sacrifices to deities such as fire, indra, sun and the moon according to

their tradition. These sacrifices ultimately come to me. Since I am this entire universe. But their weorship is not straight-forward, but devious (341-345). The branches and leaves all spring from one and the same seed; but the tree has to be watered at the root, which alone can suck the water. All the ten senses belong to the same body, and all the sensations they receive go to one and same point (the mind). How would it do, if we were to stuff delicious food into the ears or tie food on to the eye? – nay, it is for the mouth to relish the food and for the nose to smell fragrance, and so I must be worshipped in my own being. Else whatever worship is done without knowing me becomes fruitless; and, therefore, only action backed by knowledge becomes flawless (346-350).

21. *For I am the enjoyer and the lord of all sacrifices; but they do not know my true nature and so fall.*

    Moreover, know that none but me is the enjoyer of all these sacrificial offerings made to the deities. I am the origin and the end of all sacrifices; but not konwing this these benighted persons worship deities. The holy water of the Ganga offered to the gods and forefathers has to be offered in the Ganga alone. So they offer to me whatever is mine, but in a different way. They therfore, do not, o partha, attain to me at all, and go to the deities in whom they have placed their faith.

22. *Those who take cows of deities go to the deities; those who take the vows of forefathers go to the forefathers, those who worship the spirits go to the spirits. And only those who worship me come to me.*

    Those who are devoted to the gods in thought, speech and body become united to the gods after death (351-355). And those who take up vows of ancestral worship go to the abode of manes at the end of their life. Those who worship petty deities and spirits, regarding them as supreme gods, to acquire magical charms, they join them with the fall of their bodies. In this way, their acts bear fruits appropriate to their desires. My devotees, however, see me with their eyes, hear my praise with their ears, meditate on me with their minds and sing my praises with their tongues. They prostrate themselves before me and perform all their acts of charity for me alone (356-360). Their learning is centred in me, they are both internally and externally satisfied with me and their entire life is dedicated to me. Whatever little ego they have, it is to extol my divine glory and if they care for any thing in the world, it is to know me. If they have passion and love, it is for me alone; and being intoxicated with divine madness, they become indifferent to the world. Whtaever scriptures they study, whatever incantations they utter and whatever actions they perform are entirely devoted to me. Surely even before death they are already united with me. How then will they go anywhere after death? (361-365). Therefore, those who sacrifice to me and have dedicated all their actions to me, have

attained oneness with me. No one can attain devotional love for me without self-surrender nor can one attain to me by performing mere rites. He who says that he knows me knows nothing; he who flaunts his perfection is far from being perfect; and he who boasts of self-realization is dumb. Similarly, o Arjuna, all tall talk of sacrifice, charity or penance has no more worth than straw. Just see, is there any one here who excels the Vedas in knowledge or who is more loquacious and eloquent than the Shesha (366-370)? The Shesha has hid himself under my bed and the Vedas have turned their back by saying "Not this, Not this" and sages such as Sanaka became confused. Who among the great ascetics can hold a candle to lord Shiva, but he too, dropping all pride, bears on his head the holy water of my feet. Then who is there richer than Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, in whose home deities of prosperity (riddhi) and of miraculous powers (siddhi) work as maids of honour. And when these maids build toy houses, they become beggars. The trees at which they cast their glance become with-yielding trees (371-375)

Even their mistress, the goddess Lakshmi, who has at her beck and cal such powerful maids, does not command respect here. when she too, shedding her pride, served me with heart and soul, she got her lucky break of being entrusted with the duty of washing my feet.

Therefore, cast off all ideas of greatness, and forgetter all your learning. When you humble yourself before all your learning. when you humble yourself before the world, then you will come close to me. When the moon pales before the sun of show off its light? where the greatness of goddess Lakshmi or the austerities of lord Shiva pale into insignificance, how can an ordinary mortal enter my kingdom (376-380)? so let him surrender to me the pride of his physical strength, his virtues and the vanity of riches to become worthy of me.

23. *Whoever offers me with devotion a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water, I enjoy that offering made with devotion, by a pure soul.*

When a devotee offers me a fruit of any tree out of unbounded love and joy, then I clasp it with both hands and swallow it, stalk and all. if he offers me a flower as a token of his devotion and love, I should smell it, but I thrust it into my mouth and relish it. and why talk of a flower, even if a leaf, fresh or dry of any tree (381-385), is offered to me out of deepest live, I enjoy it with as much pleasure as a hungry person experiences with a drink of nectar. But if, perchance, it happens that one does not find even a leaf, there should be no difficulty in getting water at any palace. it can be had for nothing anywhere, and if he procures and offers it to me as his all, I appreciate it as though he has built for me big temples grander that vaikunth or fooled to me gems more sparkling than the Kaustubha, or has made for me abundant beds as fascinating as the milky ocean (386-390),

or he has burnt before me incense-sticks of sandal and camphor as big as the Meru Mountain of made for me a row of wick-lamps as lustrous as the sun, or has provided me with vehicles like Garuda, gardens of wish-yielding trees of herds of wish-yielding cows; or has served me dainties more delicious than nectar. I am so pleased with a drop of water offered to me by my devotees what more need I say, o Arjuna? you have seen with your own eyes that I united the knots of the bag containing parched rice brought by sudama. I recognize only devotion and make no distinction between high and low. I prize beyond all thing only devotion and love from my devotee (391-395). After all, a flower, or fruit is a mere token of devotion, which is of no avail without deep love for me. O Arjuna, listen, there is a simple way to acquire it; have trusting me and establish me in the shrine of your mind.

24. *Whatever you do, whatever you eat, sacrifice or give, whatever penance you do, o Arjuna, offers that to me.*

    Whatever work you do or whatever things you enjoy, whatever you offer in sacrifices of various kinds, whatever gifts you give to eligible persons or servants, or whatever penance you practice or vows you observe-whatever things that you do in the natural course of your life, you offer them to me with love (396-400). But do not keep any remembrance of whatever you and so cleansing your deeds thus, you dedicate them to me.

25. *Then you shall be free from the bonds of good or bad deeds. Ten if you remain intent on yoga of renunciation, you will come to me.*

    Just as the seed roasted in fire does not sprout, so all actions dedicated to me do not fructify and bind. Otherwise if an action has to bear fruit in the form of pleasure and pain, then one has to take recourse to a body to expiate it. if that action is surrendered to me he escapes rebirth and along with it the trials and tribulations of life. therefore, lets you should lose time by deferring the action till the morrow, I have disclosed to you this simple way of renunciation (401-405). you should not, therefore, fall into this bondage to the body, or immerse yourself in the sea of pleasure and pain, but by resorting to this path merge yourself in my blissful being.

26. *I am the same to all beings; none is hateful or dear to me. but those who worship me with devotion, they are in me and I am in them.*

    if you ask me what I am, I am ever the same to all beings, without distinction between my own and another's devotee. but those who know me thus, breaking the bond of egoism and worship me wholeheartedly in thought and deed, they do not remain in their bodies, even though they appear to do so. but they abide in my being, and I abide in them. Just as an expanding banian tree is contained in its small seed, which has itself

sprung from a banian tree, (406-410) that is the bond between us. we differ outwardly in name only, but in truth, if we consider their inner state, they and I are one. their assumption of a body is as empty and meaningless, as the wearing of borrowed ornaments by a lady. Their body lasts till the end of their life span, as a flower deprived of its fragrance by a breeze remains on its stalk. with his self-sense being entirely merged in my being, he has entered my divine eternal self.

27. *Even if a person of vilest conduct worships me and not other, he too must be reckoned good, for he is rightly resolved.*

    He who worships me with love never resorts to the body again, even though he belongs to a lower caste (411-415). o grate warrior, even if his previous conduct is that of a great sinner, he has taken, at the end of life, to the path of devotion. since his understanding at the time of death determines his future life, therefore, if he has dedicated his life to devotion at the close of life, know him to be the best of all, even though he has dissolute before. he is like one, who about to be drowned in a heavy flood, has come out safe. as he has come safely to the same shore he was not drowned at all; so his previous sinful acts have been washed away by his devotion at the end of his life. therefore, if a dissolute person takes a dip in the holy water of penitence, he enters my being through his exclusive devotion (416-420). then his family becomes pure, noble and spotless and he himself attains the highest goal of life. He is to me like a learned person who has practiced penance and the eightfold discipline of yoga. he, who is full of devotional zeal for me, crosses the sea of worldly life and action. for all his acts of mind and intellect are offered to me with single-minded devotion and self-surrender to me.

28. *He soon becomes righteous and finds everlasting peace. Be assured o son of Kunti that my devotee does not perish.*

    Do not for a moment think that he will become like me in course of time. How can one immersed in nectar suffer death (421-425)? so long as the sun does not rise, it is called night. Should we not then reckon as great sin whatever is done without devotion to me? Therefore, the mind of my devotee reaches outs to me and attains truly my divine nature. just as a lamp, which lights another lamp, cannot be marked off from the latter, so whoever is devoted to me with all his heart, remains inseparable from my eternal self. Then he attains to eternal peace and becomes lustrous, and he lives absorbed in my life.

    How often should I repeat to you the same thing again and again? if you wish to attain me do not shrink from devotion to me (426-430). One need not boast of a high family or bask in the splendor of a noble birth and why should one crave needlessly for learning? why pride oneself on one's

youthful charms, why blow the trumpet of one's wealth? All this is so much vain talk without devotion to me. Of what use is a good crop of corn without grain, or a splendid but unpopulated city or a lake which is dry, or the meeting of two sufferers in a forest, or a tree with profuse blossoms but without fruit? all that wealth, high birth, family, caste, respect are worthless, like a body of beautiful limbs without life in it (431-435). Cursed is that life in which there is no devotion to me. are there not many stones on this earth? Just as the wise avoid the shade of a prickly pear, even so merit turns away from a person without devotion. When the neem tree becomes laden with fruits, it provides a feast to the crows; so a life without devotion to me becomes a seedbed of vices. Just as a rich dish served in a broken earthen pot and kept in a thoroughfare becomes a feast to the dogs, similar is the life or a non-devotee. not knowing piety even in a dream, he drinks the bitterest cup of sorrow (436-440). so one need not have a noble birth; one may belong to the lower caste or be endowed with the body of a beast. You know how an elephant seized by a crocodile devoutly and piteously prayed to me and, through my favor, got rid of its beastly life and attained to me.

29. *Even if those who are low - born, women, the Vaishyas and the Shudras take refuge in me, o Partha, they reach the highest goal.*

    O Partha, there are many who are lowborn, the billets of the vile, slow-witted and born in sinful wombs. they may be as stupid as stones, but have unflinching devotion to me. Their speech sings my glory, their eyes enjoy my form, their minds ever think of me and of nothing else (441-445). Their ears hear nothing but my famous deeds and they think that their bodies are aborted by service to me. their knowledge is indifferent to sense-objects and conscious only of myself; if they cannot have a life like this, they are lowborn and are not learned in the scriptures, they are not a bit inferiors when compared to me. see, with the wealth of their devotion, the demons scoffed at the gods; and I had to incarnate myself for the glory of Prahlada (446-450). He suffered great trotters for my sake and I had to provide him with whatever he wanted. Even though he was born in a demon family, he excelled Indra in glory. Therefore, devotion to me alone counts and not caste. when a piece of leather bears the royal seal, not even gold or silver, has the power to make the piece of leather the measure of value with which to buy things. so a person attains greatness and infinite knowledge, if his mind and intellect are full of devotion to me (451-455).

    Therefore, noble family, color and caste are of no account; what is of vital is of vital significance is to have love for me. If devotion of whatever kind enters his mind and fills it with love for me, then all his past life is effaced thereby. streams remain as streams so long as they do not meet the Ganga; but they become on with the Ganga after joining it. we can

distinguish wood as sandalwood or catch, so long as they are not consumed by fire. Even so their different castes as Kshatriya, Vaishya, women or the lower caste knows men, so long as they do not attain to me (456-460). this distinction by caste or as an individual becomes naught, when they become merged into me through devotion like salt merged into the sea. Rivers and streams are known to be flowing east or West, only until they join the sea. By whichever path a devotee's mind enters my divine being, it becomes one with me of its own accord. When iron is used to break the philosopher's stone, the moment it touches the stone it changes into gold. did not the minds of milkmaids of Gokul become united with my eternal being though love? (461-465). Did not Kamsa attain to me out of fear or shishupal, the king of Chedi through prolonged enmity. the Yadavas and Pandavas attained union with me though ties of kinship, and Vasudeva and others through filial love. Narada, Dhruva, Akrura, Shuka and Sanatkumara attained to me through devotion. O wielder of the bow. Gopis attained to me through love, Kamsa through fear and Shishupal and others through their wicked intentions. I am the final goal for one who seeks me by whatever path, through devotion, renunciation or through enmity (466-470). Therefore, bear in mind, o Partha, that there is no dearth of means with which one can enter into my being. In whatever caste one is born, whatever be his ruling passion, whether love or hatred he should direct it to me. by whichever path you wish to belong to me, you will surely become one with me in due course. therefore, o Arjuna, if a person whether of vile birth, or Vaishya or shudra or woman worships me, he or she enters my eternal abode.

30. *How much more so then holy Brahmins and devotee royal sages? Having come to this impermanent joyless world, worship me.*

    Much more so will the Brahmins attain to that divine abode; for they bear royal insignia among the castes, have received divine gifts and are the fountain of sacred lore (471-475). They are divine beings on the earth, the very embodiment of austerities and because of them the sacred waters have attained their glory. in them the sacrifices have their eternal home and the Vedas form their strong armors, and suspiciousness is nourished in their loving glance. The moisture of their faith fosters virtuous actions, and truth survives because of their firm resolve. by Vedic mantras the fire enjoys long life and in order to gains their affection, the sea provided a haven for it. I parted company with goddess Lakshmi to gain the dust of their feet, took off my Kaustubha gem from my breast and laid it bare before a worthy Brahmin (Bhrigu) to receive his footprint, (476-480). ever since, O Arjuna I have preserved and borne that footprint on my chest, which I received through my good fortune. the wrath of the Brahmins, o great warrior, is verily the home of the destructive deities of death, fire and Rudra, and from their benediction flow the eight miraculous powers. then do I need to tell you that such holy Brahmins, who are passionately

devoted to me, attain to me, in course of time? For know yea not that even the neem trees, which are wafted by the breeze flowing from the nearby sandalwood trees, become fragrant and adorn the foreheads of the ditties? How then can you feel a doubt that the sandalwood tree would not do so? Do I have to tell this to you in so many words to convince you (481-485)? God Shiva ever bears on his forehead the crescent moon in the hope that it would cool him down. How then should the sandalwood, which is perfectly soothing and fragrant, not be considered worthy of covering his whole body? when the steer waters joining the Ganges reach the sea, how can the river have a different destination?

Therefore, if a devotee, be he a royal sage or a Brahmin, takes refuge in me, I grant his liberation and become his support. how can one remain carefree if he boards a boat with a hundred leaks or face a volley of missiles with a bare body (486-490)? Should not one shield oneself from stones hurled at him? and how can one suffering from an ailment be indifferent to treatment? How can one not escape, O son of Pandu, from a conflagration threatening him from all sides? So how can a person fail to worship me after coming to this world full of troubles? With what strength can he hope to live without devotion to me, and how can he feel secure in the enjoyment of worldly pleasures? without devotion to me, how can a being count upon youth and worldly wisdom to yield the full measure of happiness? All the sensuous pleasures are for the sake of the body; but that body itself is wasting away into the jaws of death (491-495). After unloading goods in the form of miseries and experiencing a number of deaths one has arrived in this marked of the mortal world. How can you purchase happiness in this transient life? Can one kindle a light by blowing up ashes? As well can a person hope to become immortal, if he crushes poisonous roots and drinks the juice, calling it nectar? Sensuous pleasure is, therefore, nothing but pain; but somehow man, fool that he is, is never fed up with it.

Happiness in this mortal sword is as good as healing the footnote with the head after cutting it (496-500). Where can one hear the tale of happiness in this mortal world? How can one expect to enjoy sound sleep on a bed of embers? In this world the moon wanes and the sun rises only to set; and misery torments the world in the guise of happiness. Rot overtakes an auspicious thing even before it starts, and death stalks the womb to seize the foots. While man is brooding over trifles, he is suddenly snatched away by death and taken to an unknown place. No one has seen the return of footprints of those who have departed. The Puranas are full of only stories of the dead (501-505). One cannot do justice to the impermanence of this world, even if one were to talk about it till the end of Brahma's life. One is surprised to see the carefree manner in which persons who are born in this world live. They do not spend even apiece for things, which will bring them benefit in this or the other world, but they will

spend millions of rupees on harmful things. They think a person happy when he is absorbed in sensuous enjoyments and a person wise, who is oppressed by the burden of desires. They respect and bow before and elderly person even when his working life is finished and his strength and intellect have waned. (506-510). As a child grows, they fondle it with great joy and do not grieve that its life is getting reduced. A child comes under the sway of death from its very birth, but they celebrate its birthday with great pomp. O Partha, people cannot bear to hear the name of death and mourn when a relation dies. But they do not foolishly consider how their life is getting spent. When the serpent is swallowing the frog, the latter is catching flies with its tongue. In the same way, being increase their desires. Alas! How foul and perverse are the things of this mortal world! O Partha, even though you are born in this world by mere accident (511-515), spurn it and take to the path of devotion, by which you will come to my eternal abode.

31. *Fix your mind on me, be devoted to me: sacrifice to me and prostrate yourself before me. you shall surely come to me by practicing yoga, with me as your supreme goal.*

    Fix your mind on me and develop a liking for my worship and bow to all, knowing that I dwell in them. He, who destroys his desires, fixing his mind on me, is said to be my devotee. When you are endowed with this yoga, you will attain to my being. I have told you this secret of my heart. by knowing this secret, which I have kept concealed from all others, you will be filled with happiness.

    Sanjaya said, "In this way, lord Krishna of light complexion, who fulfils the desires of his devotees like the wish-yielding tree, instructed Arjuna, listen, all of you. But the old king remained as quiet as the buffalo, which remains seated in the river even when it is in floods. Then Sanjaya, nodding his head, said to himself, "We are having a shower of nectar here, but this old king is sitting as if he is in a different town. but he is the provider of food to us and so I do not wish to pollute my speech by talking ill of him. But what can I do? He is made that way. but how lucky I am that the great sage Vyasa entrusted this work to me" (521-525). When he was brooding thus in his mind, he could not control the eight emotional states, which surged in his mind. his mind which was immersed in the conversation became steady, his speech stopped at that very spot and his body was thrilled from top to toe. Tears of joy began to flow from his half-shut eyes and he felt tremors in his body arising out of inner joy. As spotless drops of sweat flowed from his pores, he looked as if he was wearing a necklace of pearls. He lost his body consciousness in this flood of grate joy and it became impossible for him to discharge the task entrusted to him by sage Vyasa (526-530), But just then the ringing voice of lord Krishna entered his ears and he came to his senses. Then he wiped off his tears and

sweat and spoke to Dhritarashtra, "O King, listen". Now the seed of lord Krishna's speech was fertilized by the pure emotion states of Sanjaya and so the hearers will receive a harvest of philosophical truths. If you give the scantiest attention to this conversation, you will become overjoyed. For, fortune has become favorable to the organs of hearing today. And so, Krishna, the lord of all perfected beings, will relate the manifestations of god. Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivrittinatha says, "Now listen to that story (531-535)".

Chapter Tenth

DIVINE MANIFESTATIONS

Gurudeva, you are an adept in imparting a clear knowledge of Brahman, in making the lotus of learning bloom and in sporting lovingly with the maiden in the form of the subtlest inarticulate speech; my salutations to you. You are the sun who destroys the darkness of ignorance in the form of worldly existence. You are a powerful god, who promotes with ease the highest state of the mind in which it becomes one with the supreme self, I bow to you. You are the protector of the whole world, the mine of gems in the form of blissful things, the sandalwood tree in the woods in the form of good men. A deity worthy of being worshipped by the devotees, my salutations to you. You are the moon who gives delight to the Chakora birds in the form of the discerning men. The prince among the realizers of self. The ocean of Vedic knowledge. The destroyer of the god of love: I bow to you. You are worthy of being worshipped with pure devotion as the destroyer of the temples of the elephant in the form of worldly existence, and the origin of the world. I bow to you (1-5).

When Ganesha in the form of your grace bestows his gift. Even a child has access to the sanctuary of literary art. When your noble voice gives the pledge of safety, one can dive into the Ambrocial Ocean of the nine literary sentiments *(rasas)*. When your loving speech grants its favours, even a dumb person can complete with the preceptor of gods in literary talent. Not only this, but even an ordinary mortal attains to divine eminence, when your benedicrory glance falls upon him or your blissful hand touches his head. How can I describe with the feeble power of my speech the glorious grace of my Master? Can one besmear the body of the sun with sandalwood paste? (6-10) With what blossoms can one embellish the wish-yielding tree? How can one extend hospitality to the milky ocean? With what scent can one make camphor fragrant? With what kind of perfume can you besmear the sandalwood tree? What dish can you serve to nectar? How is it possible to become higher than the sky? What means can you employ to gauge properly the glory of my master? Therefore, I offer him my mute solutions. Any attempt on the strength of intellect to describe the glorious power of the master is like giving gloss to the pearl. Any words of praise to his are like silver plating the gold. I, therefore, think it best to prostrate myself at the feet of my master in great humility (11-15).

Shri Jnanadeva added, "O my Master, since you blessed me with your graceful glance out of affection for me, I have become the holy baniyan tree at the confluence of rivers in prayaga in the form of the conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna. When Upamanyu begged for milk of

your, Lord Shankara placed the cup of milky ocean before him or when the boy Dhruva was sulking because of the ill-treatment of his step - mother, the lord of Vaikuntha humored him by giving him a lollipop in the form of a firm seat at the north Pole. So my master has bestowed upon me the power to explain in *ovi* curses the Bhagavad - Gita, which is the most excellent text among the Brahman-lore's and the resting - place for all scriptures. When I was roaming in the forest of words, not a single meaningful word had fallen on my ears, but my speech blossomed into the creeper of marvelous thought because of your grace (16-20). Because of it, my intelligence, which had not transcended the consciousness of the body, became the treasure house of divine bliss. My mind has now become a temple in the milky ocean in the form of the Gita doctrines. This is the incomprehensible deed of my master. With what words can I describe deed of my master? With what words can I describe his infinite power? I seek his forgiveness for daring to sing his glory with inadequate words.

By your grace I have been able so far to explain with great joy the first part of the Bhagavad - Gita in short sweet verses (*ovis*). The first chapter describes the despondency of Arjuna at the prospect of a war with his kinsmen. In the second chapter, the lord has explained clearly the yoga of action, distinguishing it from the yoga of knowledge. In the third chapter the lord has expanded the single yoga of action, revealing in the fourth chapter the relation of action to knowledge. In the fifth chapter, he explains the true intent of yoga (21-25), of which he gives a clear exposition in the sixth beginning with postures of body right up to the union of the self with the supreme spirit. The sixth chapter also contains a clear description of the state of yoga and the state to which one fallen from the yogic path returns. The seventh chapter explains at the start how one should avoid the temptations of *prakriti* and then goes on to describe the four kinds of devotees of god. The eighth chapter raises some questions and ends it by stating what his remembrance should be at the time of death.

Now the Mahabharata contains in its hundred thousand verses the numerous views contained in the Vedas (26-30). And all the import of the Mahabharata has found its way in the seven hundred verses of the Gita, which embodies the conversation between lord Krishna and Arjuna. That import is contained in the single ninth chapter. I was, therefore, doubtful whether I shall be able to explain clearly the import of this chapter. Why should I flaunt my ability to do so? For lumps of Jugglery and sugar are made from the same sugarcane juice, and yet they have different flavours. Similarly, some chapters describe in clear words the doctrine of Brahman; some show the way to the abode of Brahman and some, which try to know Brahman, lose themselves, along with the knowledge, in the nature of Brahman. Such are the chapter of the Gita, but the ninth chapter is such that one cannot describe it adequately. O my master, if I have lain open the truth in it, it is entirely due to your grace (31-35). The outer garment of a sage (Vashishtha) shed light like the sun; another sage (Vishvamitra)

created another world; and one (Shri Ram) built a bridge of stones and took his army across the sea; one (Hanuman), immediately after his birth, seized the sun in his hand, thinking it to be a fruit and sage Agastya drank the sea in one sip. In the same way, you made a dumb creature like me speak about the incomprehensible Brahman. Just as you cannot compare the war between Ram and Ravana with any war except itself, so I say that Lord Krishna's talk in the ninth chapter cannot be matched by anything except itself. Only the knowers of truth, who have comprehended the meaning of the Gita, can settle the question. I have thus explained to you the nine chapters according to my ability.

Now I begin the second half of the Gita (36-40). At the very start lord Krishna will describe his main and secondary manifestations. I shall tell you that tale, which is full of savoir and beauty. With the beauty of this language, the serene sentiment will surpass the amorous sentiment and because of that these verses will adorn the Marathi Literature. If you will read closely the original Sanskrit text and its Marathi commentary, you will be at a loss to know which is the original text. When ornaments embellish the beautiful body of a maiden, it is difficult to judge which adorns what. Similarly both the Sanskrit and Marathi languages have come together to explain the purport of the Gita Listen now with a serene mind how they illumine and embellish the truth (41-45). When one wishes to disclose the purport to a text, the sentiments receive a Philip, and the literary art shown in that regard becomes an object of admiration. I have, therefore, borrowed the beauty and youth of the Marathi language to elucidate the truths contained in the Gita. Now listen to what the lord of the Universe, the scion of the Yadus and giver of marvelous joy to the enlightened souls, said to Arjuna. Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivritti, says: Shri Hari said, O Arjuna, are you giving full attention to what I am saying?

The blessed Lord said:

1. *Once again, O mighty armed (Arjuna), listen to my supreme utterance, which, desiring your good, I shall speak to you, who are pleased, with it.*

Bow I tried to assess how well you listened to what I told you so far. I am now assured that you gave adequate attention to what I said (46-50). Just as one puts a little water in an earthen pot to see whether it leaks before filling it up, so I made sure that you were attentive to my small talk and now I felt like telling you more. You test a newly appointed servant by seeing whether he picks up things lying about and then put him in charge of the treasury, so you have already become the treasure-house of my knowledge. Even as the cloud swells and overflows after seeing the mountain, so lord Krishna glanced at Arjuna with great affection. Then lord Krishna, the ocean of mercy, said o mighty armed Arjuna, and I shall repeat my view to you, which I had told you earlier. Even though one reaps and abundant harvest by tilling the soil every year, one should not

feel tired of doing so (51-55) or one should purify by hating the gold over and over again, as it improves its luster. Therefore, o Partha, I am repeating my talk not to oblige you, but for my own satisfaction. When the child is decorated with ornaments, it does not know it, but the mother enjoys it as a festive occasion. In the same manner, the more you realise your own good, the more it will add to my happiness. But enough of this declamation. In truth, I like you so much that I am not satisfied by this long chat with you (56-60). Therefore, I am repeating to you the same thing over and over again, so hear with concentration. O discerning Arjuna, listen to my excellent talk. These are not mere words, but in this form it is the absolute truth, which has come to hold you in its loving embrace. But you have not yet known my real nature. You see me here in flesh and blood, but I am really this whole universe.

2. *The host of celestial beings does not know my origin nor do the great seers. I am the origin of the celestial beings and of all the great seers.*

   The Vedas became confounded trying to know my essence; the mind and vital breath lost their nerve in trying to reach the sun and me and moon were eclipsed before my splendor, even before the night had set in. As the foetus in the womb cannot gauge its mother's age, so all these gods cannot know me (61-65). Just as aquatic creatures cannot fathom the sea, or the files cannot cross over the sky, so the wisdom of the sages cannot penetrate into my being. Many ages have rolled on in the man's attempts to delve into my mysteries as to who I am, how great, of what origin and my where about. Because, O Arjuna both the gods and the great sages, much less all the liking beings find it difficult to know me, as I am their origin. If water running downhill can rise up to the top or the tree starts spreading downwards and reach its roots, then alone the world of beings originating from me can comprehend me. If the core of the fig tree could cover up the tree and the forest, of the waves could contain within them the sea of entire globe could be contained in one single atom. (66-70) Only then living beings, great sages and gods originating from me will be able to know me, even though it is difficult to know me, if a person gives up the path of activity and turning away from sensuous enjoyment abandons body - consciousness and, sets himself on the crown of the five great elements (i.e. brings them under his control),

3. *He who knows me as the unborn, beginningless, supreme lord of the world, he is undeluded among the mortals and is liberated from all sins.*

   And who, in this frame of mind, sees my beginningless nature in the clear light of self-knowledge, he knows that I am the great lord of all beings, beyond causation (71-75). Like a philosopher's stone among stones, nectar among liquids, he is a part of my divine essence amongst all mortals. He is the embodiment of knowledge, moving about and talking.

His limbs are verily the blossoms of happiness and his assumption of a human body is mere delusion. Just as a diamond found in chamfer does not dissolve in water, although he moves about among men like an ignorant person, he is not tainted by *maya* and gets rid of all his sins. Just as a serpent flees from a burning sandalwood tree, so desires leave a person who knows me (76-80). If the thought has occurred to you how to know what I am and what the modes of my being are, I shall tell them to you, listen. My manifestations are spread in different being in this universe, taking form according to their dispositions.

4. *Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from delusion, forbearance, truthfulness, self-control, serenity, happiness, sorrow, birth and death and fear as also fearlessness,*
5. *Non-violence, even-mindedness, contentment, austerity, charity, fame and infamy - these different modes of beings spring from me alone.*

Intelligence is the first of my modes. Thereafter unlimited knowledge, absence of delusion, forbearance, forgiveness and truth followed by self-control and sense-restraint and o Arjuna, the pleasure and pain in this world, as well as birth and deaths are the modes of my being. So are, o son of Pandu, fear, fearlessness, non-violence, equality, contentment and austerities (81-85). Similarly charity, success and infamy, which one comes across everywhere, are produced in the beings by my alone. Just as living beings are different, so are my modes different. Some of these modes have knowledge of my divine being; others are ignorant of it. Light bursts at sunrise, darkness spreads at sunset, both arise from the sun. So to know me and not to know me are the result of actions in previous births and so modes differ in different created beings. Thus, my nodes (86-90) pervade O Arjuna, this universe of living beings. Now I shall tell you about the guardians of creations who are my eleven projections, under whose command all created beings deport themselves.

6. *the seven great seers of old as also the four manus, from whom, the human race has sprung. Are of my very essence, born of my mind.*

Then there are seven famous seers such as Kashyapa, who are endowed with all virtues and are perfect in wisdom among all sages. Besides these, there are also four manus, beginning with the self-existent (*svayambhuva).* o wielder of the bow, these are my eleven projections, emanating from my mind, to undertake created, the three worlds were not properly arranged and the five gross elements had remained functionless (91-95). Then came these eleven projections of mine, which formed the worlds and created guardians to protect them. In this way these eleven beings are the rulers of the world, with all the people therein as their subjects. Know that this expanse of the universe has come out of my very being. Behold, there is at the start only a germ, which bursts into a stem,

which then grows into shoots and branches. Form the branches come out twigs which bear leaves and tender foliage, from which blossom flowers and fruits. Thus grows a tree, but if you think over it, it is the single germ, which has spread out as a tree (96-100). So I was alone at the beginning; from me the mind was born, and from the mind came into being the seven sages and the four manus. They created the guardian deities to preside over the world, from whom sprang the three worlds and all living beings. So this entire universe has expanded from my being and so only those who realise that all these projections have their origin from me, are blessed with true insight.

7. *He, who knows truly this creative power and manifestation of mine, becomes united with unshakable yoga; of this there is no doubt.*

   So, my modes and manifestations pervade o Arjuna, this universe. Hence. From Brahma to an ant, there is nothing but my divine self (101-105). He, who knows this well, is truly awakened, and he does not suffer from the dream of distinctions among living beings as good and bad. Whoever realises through yoga that I am not different from my manifestations and the living beings born of these manifestations becomes one with heart soul and me. O Arjuna, whoever worships me with this vision of unity, I become his servant by reason of this worship. Therefore, I have taught you this yoga of devotion, consisting of knowledge of unity, which continues without interruption. Even if one meets his death while practicing this devotion, it is all to the good. This is what I told you in the sixth chapter (106-110). If you wish to know this devotional yoga of God's unity, listen to these words of mine.

8. *Knowing that I am the source of all, and that everything proceeds from me, the wise worships me full of rapturous devotion.*

   O Arjuna, I am the source from which this universe takes its birth and sustenance. Just as waves arise in water, take shelter in water and have their being in water, and is nothing but water, so there is nothing in this world without me. The knows of self who realise this all-pervasive nature a of mine and worship me with true devotion and love (111-115), and know that I am not separate from place, time and circumstance, recollect me in their mind and happily sport in the three worlds, just as the wind, taking the form of a kasha, moves in the akasha. They also regard that every being that they see is of divine nature. Know that this is my true yoga of devotion.

9. *With their mind and life centered on me, extolling me to one another, and constantly conversing about me, they find solace and rejoice.*

Those who have become united with heart soul, and me and become thoroughly contented, have become forgetful of birth and death in their passionate zeal for self-knowledge. Then they begin to dance, in sheer ecstasy, with the joy of conversation, exchanging their thoughts and experiences of self-knowledge (116-120). When two close-lying lakes in spate overflow into each other, their waters mingle and their waves rise into spirals, so in the union of self-realised devotees, the ripples of their ecstatic joy get woven into a braid and the grandeur of self-knowledge of one displays itself, in harmony with the self-knowledge of the other. As if the sun should wave a light before another sun or the moon should embrace another moon, or two streams of equal flow should mingle with one another, so when such blessed souls come together, they form a confluence of sacred streams of divine life, throwing up on its surface pure sentiments (*sattvic bhavas*). Then the devotees become as it were presiding deities on the high way in the form of a dialogue. Overflowing with this supreme bliss they forget their body-consciousness and proclaim loudly their rapturous joy at having attained union with me, (121-125). They declare to the whole world in a sonorous voice like that of clouds the secret and music *mantra*, which the master discloses in solitude to his disciple. Just as when a lotus blossoms, it is unable to contain its sweet smell within itself, and wafts it equally to prince and pauper, so these devotees, while singing my glory, become so absorbed in the soul's joy that they become oblivious of everything and thereby lose their body-consciousness. Utterly oblivious of the time's flow by day and night in this overflowing love for god, they remains settled in the enjoyment of their blissful union with me.

10. *To those, who ever absorbed in yoga worship me with love, I give the yoga of wisdom by which they come unto me.*

    O Arjuna, of whatever gifts I wish to give them, they have already picked up the choicest one (126-130). Considering the highway, which they have started to tread to come to me, heaven and liberation seem like by 1lanes. The devotion, which they bear me, is my gift to them. Whatever I wished to give them, they have at ready appropriated it. My only wish now is that this devotional love of theirs should go on increasing and the malignant glance of time should not fall on it. Just as doting mother follows its child at play wherever it goes and provides it with whatever toys it asks for, so it is my pleasure to increase the status of devotion (131-135). I wish to increase especially those methods of worship by practicing which my devotees will find it easy to come to me. Since my devotees will find it easy to come to me. Since my devotees are attracted to me I am also drawn to them because of their single - minded devotion; for loving devotees are rare in my abode. See, for the comfort of ordinary devotees, I have earmarked the well-trodden paths of paradise and liberation and I have allotted to them even my person with goddess Lakshmi, but I have

set apart for my intimate debates the supreme bliss of self-knowledge. O Arjuna, this way I love and keep my loving devotees close to me. But it is beyond the power of words to describe this love (136-140).

11. *Out of pure compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance with the shining lamp of isdom.*

    For those who have taken refuge in me and regard all else as trash through devotion, o great warrior, I light the torch of camphor and walk in front of them as their torch-bearer even in broad daylight. For these devotees, I dispel the darkness of the night of primeval ignorance and bring them the dawning light of wisdom. When the supreme person beloved of his devotees, spoke thus, Arjuna said, "Now all my desires are fulfilled. O lord, you have swept away the dust of worldly existence and freed me from the cycle of birth the death (141-145). O god, I have seen with my own eyes the meaning of my birth, and I feel as if I have acquired now the art of living. O lord, I received the grace to hear from your own mouth your sacred utterance and so have achieved the purpose o my life. Fortune has dawned upon me, and with the darkness of ignorance gone in the light of your utterance, I have received the true vision of your being".

    Arjuna said:

12. *You are the supreme Brahman, the supreme abode, the ultimate, the all-holy, the eternal divine being, the perennial god, birthless, all-pervading.*

    O lord of the universe, you are the supreme Brahman, the haven of rest for all the gross elements, the holiest of the holy. You are the supreme deity of the triad of Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesha, the Purusha, the twenty-fifth principle and also the being who is beyond *maya* (145-150). O lord, I know now that you are existent since eternity and you are without such qualities as birth and decay. You are the Supreme Being who pulls the strings of the past, present and future times, the guardian deity of the individual selves and the support of the universe.

13. *So say all the seers, as also Narada, the divine sage, Asita, Debala, Vyasa, and you too tell me so.*

    And in another way also, I have come to know the truth of all this. Sages in the past too had told up such stories about you, but the truth of what they said has come home to me now. O god, this is all due to your grace. The divine sage Narada used to visit our home and sing your glosses; but we used to appreciate his sweet music and not its deeper meaning (151-155). The sun shines in the house of the blind, they only feel his warmth, but how could they see his light? So when the divine sage used to give us instruction in the doctrine of the self, his musical notes only used to touch

the chords of our hearts. I used to hear Asita and Devala also extol your divine glory, but at that time my mind was filled with the poison of sensuous pleasures. So deadly is the poison that the Absolute Truth, which is really sweet tastes bitter, while the sensuous pleasures, although bitter, tastes sweet. Why talk of others? Even sage Vyasa used to come to our place and describe your glorious life (156-160). But then I was like a person, who, stumbling upon a philosopher's stone (*chintamani)* in the dark paid no attention to it, until he recognized its true value after the day dawned. So although the talks of Vyasa and other were veritable mines of gems of knowledge, I brushed them aside, until I saw their worth in the light of your instruction.

14. *All this what you say, O Keshava, I believe to be true. Neither the gods nor the demons know your true manifestation, O Lord.*

    Now the RAS of your words have entered my heart and removed the ignorance about the paths taught by the sages. O Lord, their teachings were veritable seeds of knowledge, and they had gone deep into the soil in the form of my heart. These seeds, moistened by your grace, have borne fruit in the form of your divine discourse. O infinite lord, I have become as it were the sea of your blissful discourse, into which have flowed the teachings of sages like Narada in the form of river streams (161-165). O, my Master, you brought about what meritorious actions performed by me in many previous births could not achieve. For I had heard my elders extol your greatness on many occasions, but I could make neither head nor tail out of it, until I received your grace. When fortune smiled upon one, one's efforts bear gruit. Likewise, with the grace of the Guru, one realises the truth of what one has heard and studied. The gardener tends the garden toiling and sweating by watering the fruit trees, but the trees bear fruit only on the advent of the spring. A patient can relish dainty dishes only when the fever subsides. The medicine does not taste sweet until it cures the disease and restores health (166-170). The senses, speech and the vital berate achieve their purpose, only when they are moved by the spirit. Thus, it is only when a disciple receives the grace of his master that he reaps the benefit of his Vedic studies or spiritual practices. This conviction dispelled all doubts of Arjuna and made him dance with joy. He said, "O God, your words have convinced me. O Deliverer, I know now that you are obscure even to the gods and the demons. I now realise that no one who ventures upon knowing you solely relying on his intellect, will gain any knowledge of you without being initiated by you (171-175).

15. *You yourself alone know Yourself, O Supreme Person, the cause and the Lord of creatures, O God of Gods, the ruler of the world.*

Just as the sky knows its own expanse, or the earth its own mass, so you yourself, O Lord of Lakshmi, know your infinite power. The Vedas, Shastras and the Puranas boast in vein of their knowledge of you. O Lord, who can surpass the mind in speed? How can anyone clasp the wind in his arms? How can anyone swim across the river of *maya* with unaided arms? It is equally hard to know you; indeed no mortal can do so without help. You alone know your real Self and you yourself are capable of making others, by your spoken word, to realise you (176-180). O, you, creator of the universe, O you, the lion who destroys the elephant of worldly existence, O you, the Providence who is the only object of worship to all gods, do you hear me? Knowing your glory as I do, I am not even fit to stand in your presence. If I were to flinch now because of my unworthiness, From beseeching a favor from you, then there is no other way to attain you. Even if the rivers and the seas are overfulling in all ways, of what use are they to the Chataka birds? It is only when the clouds shed a few drops of water, they will have water to drink. In the same way, o Lord Krishna, although there are many Masters in the world, You are all in all to us. This is enough. Now tell me about your manifestations.

16. *Pray tell me in full your divine manifestations, by which manifestations you remain pervading this world.*

    O Lord, show me some of your divine, all-pervasive and patent manifestations (181-185). O Infinite God, tell me some of your well-known and principal manifestations, by which you have remained pervading this world.

17. *How may I know you, O Yogi, constantly meditating upon you? In what particular aspects are you to be meditated upon, O blessed Lord?*

    O Lord, How do I know you and meditate upon you? If it is said you dwell everywhere, then no meditation is possible. Therefore, whatever manifestations you had talked about before repeat them to me in greater detail. Explain your Yoga very clearly so that I can mediate upon it without effort.

18. *Tell me again in detail, your creative power (Yoga) and your manifestations, O oppressor of foes. For while hearing your Ambrocial words, I feel no satiety.*

    O Lord of all beings, tell me about your manifestations, about which I have asked. If you say why you should tell the same things over and over again (186-190), please do not entertain this doubt even for a moment, O oppressor of foes. For even an ordinary person is not satiated by the drink of nectar which is offered to him every now and then. This nectar is,

however, the brother of poison, and even though the gods drank it out of fear of death, fourteen Indras rise and fall during the span of Brahma's Day. This nectar, which was recovered from the churning of the Milky Sea, has received without any apparent reason the name of 'giver of immortality.' But no one is sated with this sweet drink and cries 'enough of it.' If such a trivial drink is held in high regard, then your talk is truly an embrocial drink of wisdom. It has not been obtained by churning the sea of milk by using the Mandara Mountain as the churning rod it is naturally without beginning and self-existent (191-195). It does not drip, is neither thin nor thick, and no one can know its sweetness of its smell, but one realises it that yearns for it. No sooner your sweet words fall on the ears, than the worldly existence appears illusory and the Yogi attains to uninterrupted eternal life. Because of it birth and death subside without a trace and the supreme bliss of self-realization pervades him in and out. If this drink becomes available to a person by good luck, it unites him with the supreme self. You are giving me such Ambrocial drink of wisdom, that I cannot say I have had enough of it. O God, I like your name, I have also met you and enjoyed your company and on the top of it you are joyously chatting with me (196-200). I do not know how to describe this happiness flowing from your talk but it gives me great joy. I, therefore, feel that I should hear it from your mouth again. O Lord, does the sunlight ever become stale? Can one call the fire impure? Or will the ever-flowing water of the river Ganges ever become unclean? When I heard your words of wisdom, I felt as if I was hearing the word of God incarnate and was smelling the flower of sandalwood.' Hearing this speech of Arjuna, Lord Krishna started reeling with great joy and said, "This Partha has verily become the repository of both knowledge and devotion." Delighted by Arjuna's speech, the Lord experienced the exhilaration of love for him, but collecting himself with great difficulty, he began to speak (201-205).

The blessed Lord said:

19. *Well then I shall recount to you my divine manifestations, but only the chief ones, O best of Kurus, for there is no limit to my expanse.*

Forgetting that he was the father of Brahma the creator. 'Lord Krishna said to Arjuna, "BA Arjuna, you have spoken well." But you should not feel any surprise that the Lord called Arjuna, *'BA'* (Father), because had he not become himself the son of Nanda? When there is excess of love, such things happen. Then the Lord said,"O archer, listen to what I am going to say. My manifestations about which you asked are unlimited in number. So even though they are my' manifestations, they are beyond the comprehension of my intellect. Just as no one can count the number of hair on one's body, I cannot count my manifestations (206-210). Even otherwise, I am myself not aware of what I am and how great. Therefore, I shall tell you my foremost manifestations. If you comprehend them, you

will come to know the other manifestations too. Just as one becomes possed of the tree if he has its seed, or if one owns the garden, one become possessed of its flowers and fruits, so by knowing my manifestation, you will grasp the whole universe. O Partha, there is no end to my expanse since even things as bit as the vault of heaven are contained in me.

20. *I am the Self, O gudakesha (Arjuna) that dwells in the hearts of all beings. I am the beginning, the middle, and also the end of al beings.*

    Hear you, O Arjuna, who have curly hair on your head and who are like Lord Shiva in the science of archery, I dwell as the Self in every living being (211-215). I abide in the heart of all beings and pervade the outer space also. I am also the beginning, the end and the middle of existence. The sky remains up and down, inside and outside of the clouds, which are born in the sky, stay in the sky and when they dissolve, remain in the sky, even so I am the origin, the support, the destroyer and the final goal of all living beings. You will come to know my boundless expanse and pervasive quality through these manifestations. Therefore, listen, being all ears with the soul in it. Now hear about my foremost manifestations. I wanted to tell them to you, but they remained to be told (216-220).

21. *Of the Adityas, I am Vishnu; of the luminaries I am the rising sun; I am Marichi of the Maruts; of the asterisms I am the moon.*

    With these words the gracious Lord said: Among the twelgve adityas. I am Vishnu. Among the lustrous things, I am the sun with respleadent rays. I am the Marichi among fifty Maruts and the moon among the stars in the sky.

22. *Of the vedas I am the Samaveda; of the celestials I am Indra; of thesenses I am the mind; of the creatures consciousness.*

    Shri Gobinda said further : I am Samaveda among the Vedas. Among the gods I am Indra, the friend of Maruts. Among the senses, I am the eleventh sense, the mind. I am also the consciousness among all the living beings.

23. *Of the Radras I am Shiva, and the god of wealth of Yakshas and demons; of the Vasus, I am Agni (fire), and Meru of the mountains.*

    Among the Rudras, I am shri Shakara, the enemy of the god of love. Have no doubt about this (221-225). Among the Yakshas and demons, I am wealthy Kubera, the friend of Shri Shankara, so said Shri Ananta. I am fire among the eight Vasus and Meru, the highest among the mountains with peaks.

24. *Know me, O Partha, as Brihaspati, the chief among house priests. Of the generals I am Skanda, and of the water, I am the ocean.*

25. *Of the great seers, I am Bhrigu, of words, I am the muttered prayer, Of stationery things the Himalayas.*

    I am Brihaspati, who is the support of Indra's throne, the ancient seat of learning and the chief of priests. O Arjuna, I am Kartikaswami, the chief among generals of the three worlds, who was born in the womb of Krittika from the seed of Lord Shiva through the medium of fire. I am the ocean of waters among the lakes. I am the great escetic Ghrigu among the great seers (226-230). I am that single syllable Om, which manifests Truth prominently in speech, and of all the sacrifices, I am the muttered prayer. In which the repetition of a *mantra* such as *om* preceded by the relinquishment of the fruit of action culminates. For that repetition of God's name, which itself is a great sacrifice and does not require such acts as bath etc., sanctifies both pious and impious acts and is known to the Vedas as the supreme Brahman. I am the Himalayas, the treasure of auspiciousness, among the immovables of the earth, so said the husband of goddess Lakshmi.

26. *Of all the trees, I am Ashvattha, of divine seers, Narada, of the celestial singers, Chitraratha, and of the Siddhas, the sage Kapila.*

27. *Know me to be, of the horses, the nectar-born Uchchaishravas, of lordly elephants, Airavata and of men, the monarch.*

    The wish - yielding tree, the coral tree and the sandalwood tree are all famous for their qualities', I am the holy fig-tree among the trees (231-235). O Arjuna, know me to be Narada mong the divine seers. I am Uchchaishtavas, among the famous horses and am Airavata among the elephants, the glory of kings. I am the nectar which the gods took out from the Milky sea aftere churning it. The monarch who is served by all his subjects is my special manifestation among all men.

28. *Of weapons, I am the tunderbolt, of the cows, the wish - yielding cow; iam cupid, the progentiter, of the serpents, I am Vasuki.*

29. *I am Ananta (Shesha) of snakes, and Varuna of acquatic creatures; of the ancestors, I am Aryaman, and Yama of those who curb.*

    O Partha, I am the thunderbolt in the hand of Indra, the performer of hundred sacrifices, which is the foremost among weapons (236-240). Among the cows, I am the wish - yielding cow, so said Lord Krishna, I am the god of love, who is responsible for procreation. I am Vasuki, the chief among the serpents and the Shesha among the snakes. Shri krishna siad, I am Varuna among the acquatic deities, the guardian of the west. I am

also the deity aryam of the Manes. I am telling this truth to you that among the restrainers, I am yama, the judge of all actions (241-245) who taking stock of men's good and evil actions and judging their motives dispenses to all the fruits of their actions strictly according to their deserts.

30. *I am Prahlada among the demons, Time among the rekoners. Of wild beasts I am the lion (mirgendra) and the eagle-god of birds.*

    O Partha, bear in mind that I am Prahlada, born in the race of demons. He was, therefore, not defiled by the demoniacal nature. Lord Krishna said, I am the Mahakala, the Time, of those who wear out and destroy things and the tiger among fierce beasts. O Arjuna, listen. I am the eagle-god among the birds, because of which he is able to carry me on his back.

31. *I am the wind among those who move fast, I am Ram among the wielders of weapons. Of fishes I am the crocodile (makara), of the rivers, I am the Ganges.*

    O wielder of the bow, among those who move fast, I am the wind, who circumambulates round the earth and the seven oceans with one bounce in lessthan half an hour (246-250). Among the wielders of wean. I am Ram, who, finding the religion in peril in the Tretayuga, espoused its cause and turned the face of victory towards him. Thin standing on the top of the suveli mountain, he cut off the heads of Ravana, the mighty lord of Lanka and offred them as oblations to the spirits. who were hailing his victory in the sky. He preserved the dignity of gods, restored the religion to its former glory and became another sun born in the solar race (251-255). I am indeed, that Ram, husband of Sita, among the bearers of weapons. Crocodile I am among the aquatic animals with tails. (251-255) Know that among the flowing rivers, I am the Ganges (Jahnavi), Whom Jahnu gulped while she was being brought to earth by Bhagiratha and took her out of his thingh. Ir I werre to describe my different manifestations in this world, I will nor be able to describe even half of them in thousand births.

32. *Of the creations, I am the beginning, middle and the end, O Arjuna. I am self-knowledge among knowledges, I am the debate of disputants.*

33. *Of the syllables, I am the syllable a, and dvandva among the compounds; I am also time eternal; I am the supporter with faces everywhere.*

    Just as one wishing to pick up the stars will have to tie up the sky in one's bag or if one wishes to count the atoms of the earth, One must hold the globe in one's armpit, so one must know me in order to perceive my expance (256-260). Just as a person wishing to gather in a bundle the branches, flowers and fruits, has to uproot the tree, one must understand my flawless nature in order to know all my special manifestations. Otherwise, O Arjuna, how long would you hear about my different

manifestations? Therefore, try to understand that I am also, O Arjuna, the origin, the middle and the end of all this created world. Just as the thread fills the warp and woof of cloth, know that I pervade this whole universe. Once you know this, then you will not find it necessary to understand all my manifestations. This however, to understand all my manifestations. This however, is still beyond your capacity, and so leave it alone (261-265). Since you have asked me about the manifestations, O Arjuna, listen to me I am the knowledge of the self which I have told you, among all lores. I am the debate among those who love to argue. This debate never comes to an end, as the shastras do nor reach a consensus. but the debate increases with the presentation of their doctrines, resulting in forceful arguments and giving greater scope to eloquent orations, I am that debate in which the disputants try to establish their own doctrines, so said shri Gobinds. I am clearly the letter a among the alphabets, and know that I am the copulative compound among the compounds. I am also the Time (Kala) who devours all from the mosquito to god Brahma (266-270). I am that unlimited time, who at the time of dissolution destroys the whole world along with the mountain Including meru, who absorbs then and there the waters inundating the world, who clasps the fire to his bosom, devours the wind and also contains the *akasha* within his belly, so said the husband of goddess Lakshmi. He further added, "I am also the creator of this world at the beginning of the cycle."

34. *I am the all-devouring Death, and the origin of things to come; of the feminine virtues, I am fame, prosperity, speech, memory, intelligence, fortitude and forgiveness.*

    Know that I create all beings, I am also their support and I am their all-devouring death too. I have also seven female manifestations which I shall tell you with delight (271-275). O Arjuna, fame, which is ever fresh, is the very image of my divine being. Know that I am also wealth which is joined to generosity. I am also the speech which is enthroned on the seat of reason and treads along the path of discriminating knowledge. I am also the power of recollection, by which a person after seeing a thing, remembers me as its creator. I am also the intelligence, which brings about one's well being in this world and am also fortitude (that makes men endure hardships and forgiveness. I am, therefore, these seven female powers, so said the lord, the lion who destroys the elephant in the form of worldly existence (276-280).

35. *likewise, I am Brihatsama of hymns, and Gayatri of the metres. Of the months I am Margashirsha, of seasons the spring.*

    The Lord of Lakshmi said, O my dearest friend, know without doubt that I am the *brihatsama* of the Samaveda in the Vedas and the metre known as

gayatri of the metres. The lord added, I am the *margashirsha* month of all months and the flowering spring among the seasons.

36. *I am the gambling of the cheats, the splendor of the splendid, I am victory, the resolve, ad the goddness of the good.*

37. *I am Vasudeva of the Vrishnis, and Dhananjaya Of the pandavas. Of the sages, I am Vyasa, and the poet Ushanas (Shukra) of the wise.*

    O clever Arjuna, I am the gambe among the deceitful arts and so the victim of gambling on the highway cannot be saved. O Partha, know fully well that I am the splendour smong all splendid things. I am also the success which crowns effort in all undertakings (281-285). I am also the profession which adopts the moral path in any undertaking, so said further : I am the godness of the good, and also the most glorious among the Yadavas. Born of Vasudeva and Devaki, I was removed to Gokula to take the place ofthe daughter of Yashoda. When Putana came to poison me, I sucked her to death. Even when the bud of my childhood had not fully blossomed, I made the earth free from demons. I held the Goverdhana mountain on the palm of my hand and brought down the prestige of Indra. I pulled out the cobra kalia, who was a thorn in the bosom of the river Yamuna and saved the ntire Gokula by swallowing its burning flames. When god Brahma lifted the calves of Gokula, I created exactly similar calves and outwitted him (286-290). In my childhood, I destroyed such fomidable foes as Kamsa and Chanura. Why should I tell you all this? You have heard and seen many such events yourself. I am, therefore, vasudeva smong the Yadavas. I am also Arjuna amongst you pandavas, born of the lunar race and therefore, our mutual love does not suffer any breach. In the guise of an ascetic you kindnapped my sister Subhadra, but I did not entertain any gurdge towards you; for we have one soul in two bodies. I am also Vyasa, the foremost among sages and I am also Shukracharya, the eminent among wise men, so said lord krishna, the king of Yadavas (291-295).

38. *I am the rod of those that chastise, and the statesmanship of those that seek victory. I am the silence too of the mysteries and the wisdom of the wise.*

    O Partha, among those who chatise, I am that inexorable sceptre which chatise, I am that inexorble sceptre which chastens all beings from an ant to god Brahms. I am ethics among all scinces, wich discriminates between god and evil and sides with duth and wisdom. I am silence, O brave Arjuna, the greatest among mysteries and therefore, even god Brahma seems ignorant before one who observes silence. Know that I am the wisdom in the wise. Enough of all this, because there is no end to these manifestations.

39. *Whatever is the seed of all creatures, I am that, O Arjuna. There is nor a thing, moving or stationary, which can exist without me.*

40. *There is no end to my divine manifestations, O scorcher of foes. However, I have said this to illustrate the full extent of my glory.*

    O Arjuna can anyone count the showers of rain or the blades of grass on the earth? (296-300). Just as no one can state definitely the number of waves on the sea, so no one can measure my special characteristics. Even then, O Arjuna, I have descrived to you seventy-five manifestations, which are the chief ones among those I possess. But I think that the purpose with which you asked about my manifestations has nor been served. The extent of my other manifestations is limitless. How many of them can I tell you and how many of them will you hear? Therefore, I shall speak to you of my deepest secret, that I am the primary seed from which aprout forth all created beings. therefore, do not regard anything as small or great, give up all distinctions of high and low, but know for certain I am all this universe (301-305). but over and above this I shall tell you, O Arjuna, a general characteristic by which you will be able to recognise my manifestations.

41. *Whatever being is majestic, excellent or mighty. know that to have sprung from a fragment of my splendor.*

    O winner of wealth, whoever possesses wealth and compassion, know that to be my manifestation.

42. *Or what is the use of your knowing all these details, O Arjuna? Pervading this whole universe. I abide in it with a fragment of myself.*

    But the sun's disc exists in the sky, yet its light fills the entire universe. In the same way, he is neither alone nor destitute, whose command is obeyed all over theworld. does the wish-yielding cow have to gather materials to fulfil the desires of others? No, she gives to anyone whatever he desires all at once. so every manifestation of mine possesses abundant majesty (306-310). Know that this is the one characteristic by wich one can recognise my manaifestations. those maanifestations before whom the whole world prostrates itself obeying their orders, are my incarnations. But it is a great error to distinguish between my manifestations as high and low, as I am this whole universe. why should you therefore, debase your reason by imagining distinctions in my manifestations as common and extraaordinary? Why should on chrun clarified butter unnecessarily or boil nectar and lose half of ir? Does the wind have right and left? If one were to see the front and the rear of the sun, he will only lose his sight. so there are no gradations of high and low in my divine being (311-315). O Arjuna, I have innumerable manifestations of different kinds; how can you count them? so give up this effort to know

me. As I have pervaded this world with a fraction of my divine being, give up the notions of distinctions and worship my different manifestations with the same consideration.

Thus spoke the Lord of divine majesty who is the very spring which delights the eforest in the form of men of wisdom and keeps company with the ascetics. Then Arjuna said, "O Lord, you seem to have said all this without proper thought. you said that we should give up all distinctions. But does the sun ever say to the world to drive away darkness? it would ndeed be rash on my part to call you thoughtless (316-320). O Lord, if a person utters your name with his lips or hears it with his ears, he will get rid of all notions of distinctions. NOw that, with my great good luck, I have attained to you, how can these distinctions survive? O Lord, can anyone enter the moons's disc and be affected with heat? Only you with all your greatness can afford to talk like this." After hearing these words of Arjuna, the lord was overjoyed and after embracing Arjuna said, "I said all this outwardly to find out whether the unity of all the different manifestations of which I spoke has left its stamp on your mind (321-325). but I am now convinced that you have a proper understanding of my manifestations." Arjuna thereupon said, "It is for you to see whether I have understood or not. I, on my part, now know that this whole universe is filled with your divine presence."

In this way, O King, Arjuna becaame fit for the experience of Brahman. When sanjaya was narrating all this, king Dhritarashtra was sitting quiet. Sanjaya fest sore at heart, seeing him in that state and said to himself, "Is it nor amazing that one should miss what good luck has brought him ? I had tought that atleast he possessed sound intelligence. But it is nor so, he is blind nor less inwardly as outwardly. Arjuna, however is trying to achieve the full measure of his good fortune. for there sprang in his heart another ardent desire (326-330). he said, " I have realised now that you are all this unverse, but I long to perceive it with my own eyes". As Arjuna was fortune's favourite, he could hope to see the cosmic form of the lord. O hearers, Arjuna was as it were, a branch of the wish-yielding tree which could never produce barren flowers. for whatever came out of his lips was accomplished by the lord. for he had lord Krishna as his great master, who himslef became poison at the bidding ofpralhada. so Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivritti, says, I shall next narrate to you how Arjuna will proceed to ask the lord to show him his universal form (331-335).

Chapter Eleventh

THE UNIVERSAL FORM

Two sentiments have received a prominent place in the eleventh chapter, in which the universal form of god will be revealed to partha. In this chapter the marvellous sentiment has come as a guest in the home of the serene sentiment and other sentiments too will share the honour of being in their company. Is not the wedding festival also an occasion for the guests to show off their fine clothes and ornaments? In the same way, all sentiments are parading in the palanquin of the local language. But amongst them the serene and marvellous sentiments stand out prominently as if for the very eyes to drink in. they give an impression as if lord's Vishnu and lord shankara has come to meet each other. So these two sentiments have come together like the sun and the moon meeting on the new moon day (1-5). Just as the two rivers Gangas and Yamuna have mingled in the confluence at the holy place prayaga, these two sentiments have come together in the eleventh chapter to form another prayaga. Therefore, by hearing this chapter, to form another Prayaga. Therefore, by hearing this chapter, the whole world attains purification. While these two streams in the form of these two sentiments are visible, the third stream Saraswati in the form of the Gita is hidden. O elders know that we have here a confluence of three rivers. My guru Nivrittinatha has made proper arrangement for everyone to enter these holy waters through the door of the organ of hearing. Shri Nivrittinatha. the repository of righteousness, has broken the hard banks of the Sanskrit text and has constructed the easy steps of Marathi language. Now anybody may take a dip in this holy confluence with devotional love, and as one has the vision of Vishnu in the holy Prayaga, he may have a vision of the universal form here and renounce the world (6-10). Here all the sentiments have come to such full expression that they have opened the kingdom of joy to the ears of mankind. Here both the serene and marvallous sentiments are patent, but other sentiments too have been given due scope. Here, even though a little, the door of liberation has been opened.

This eleventh chapter is the resting-place of the Lord. Since Arjuna is a leader among the fortunate persons, he has arrived here. but how can one say that he alone has come here? For as the import of Gita has now been made available in the Marathi language, this bliss has come within the reach of everyone. Therefore, I entreat you to give attention to me (11-15). I know that it is not proper that I should speak before this audience of holy men with such intimacy. But I would request you to treat me as your child. Don't we teach the parrot to speak and nod out heads in approval when it does so? Or does not a mother get her child to do some thing and then admire it when it is done? You yourselves have taught me to speak, and

so please hear what you have taught. You have planted this sweet tree in the form of literary work and so it is for you to ensure its growth by sprinkling it with water in the form of attention. Then this tree will bear blossoms of poetic sentiments and yield a rich crop of spiritual meanings and thus because of your religious merit the world will be blessed with abundant happiness. (16-20).

On this the holy men became favorably disposed to Jnanadeva and said, "We are delighted by your talk. Now tell us what Arjuna spoke." Then Jnanadeva, disciple of Nivritti, said, "How can an ordinary mortal like me express the deep meaning of Lord Krishna's conversation with Arjuna? But I will do so, if you give me the power to clothe that meaning with words. Did not Rama take the help of monkeys who lived on forest leaves and kill Ravana, the king of Lanka? And did nor Shri Krishna get the eleven decisions of the Kaurawa army defeated through single-handed Arjuna? Therefore no ordinary man can achieve what a mighty Lord can do. You holy men have the power to achieve it and so make me give utterance to the meaning of the Gita. I shall now tell you the true import of the Gita, which flowed from the mouth of Shri Krishna, the Lord of Vaikuntha. Pray, give me your attention (21-25). Blessed is the Gita, which is spoken by the supreme self, which is the subject of the Vedas. How is it possible to describe the greatness of this Gita, which eludes even the intelligence of Shri Shankara? therefore, it is only proper to prostrate oneself before it with all devotion and love.

Now listen, how Arjuna acquainted Lord Krishna of his ardent desire to see His universal form. When he came to realize that God had assumed the form of the universe, he had an intense longing to have its direct revelation. But he felt somewhat embarrassed to request him to show His universal form which he had so far kept secret (26-30). He thought to himself "How can I press him to show me this universal form all of a sudden, even when none of His favorite devotees had done so? Even though I am intimate with him, am I as close to Him as His mother Yashoda? but she also dared nor ask him this. Even though I have served the Lord as best as I could, could it equal the service, which is rendered to him by Garuda? but he too did nor press the Lord to show him his universal form. Am I as close to him as sages like Sanaka? But even they did nor express to him their intense desire to see this vision. Now has the lord more fondness for me than the cowherds and cowherdesses of Gokul? But he also confounded the people of gokula by feigning to be a child. He suffered birth in the womb on ten occasions for someone (King Ambrisha), but withheld from him his universal form (31-35). How could I then ask him all of a sudden to disclose his great secret? But if I do nor ask him mow; I shall feel nor only ill at ease but shall find it difficult to live. I shall now casually ask him about it, and then act according to his pleasure." Thinking thus, he made bold to ask him NW, but with some trepidation. But he did it so skillfully that the lord, in reply to his one or two questions, disclosed to him his universal form. O sages, the mere sight of

the calf makes the cow stand up with a clatter. How will she then withhold her milk when the calf begins to suck it (36-40)? See for yourselves, how can the Lord who rushed to the forest to protect the Pandavas withhold his reply to the question of Arjuna? Lord Krishna is love incarnate, and this love had received the leaven of Arjuna's love. It is, therefore, really surprising that they remained separate even after they were on the point of becoming one. The lord acceded to the request of Arjuna and showed him the universal form. I shall describe this event from the very start, please listen.

Arjuna said:

1. *As a favour to me you have propounded the ultimate mystery called the self, by which my delusion is gone.*

   Then Arjuna said, "O gracious Lord, you have explained to me very clearly what is beyond speech. When the five gross elements get dissolved in Brahman and the self and Maya become merged in you without leaving a trace, the form that you have is your resting-place (41-45). You have laid bare before me the secret of your heart, which you neither had nor even communicated, to the Vedas. You imparted to me in a moment the knowledge of the self for which lord Shiva had ren0ounced his riches and become and ascetic. But after attaining you how can I think myself as separate from you and speak thus? Truly you rescued me from the flood of delusion in which I had sunk put the head. There is nothing in this world which is without you. But it is my great misfortune that I am talking to you, as if I am separate from you (46-50). I was entertaining the egoistic feeling that I am a person by name Arjuna and used to think the Kauravas to be my kinsmen. On the top of that, I suffered from a bad dream that by slaying the Kauravas, I would commit sin and meet with a bad fate. At that very time, you woke me up. O Lord. I left the city of Gandharvas (divine singers) and was rushing to the mirage to slake my thirst. I was experiencing the sharp pangs of snakebite, although the snake was made of cloth only. I was also under the delusion of ignorance that I was dying. All credit to you that you rescued me from this delusion like that of a lion who was duped into believing that the image which he saw in the well was a different lion, but was prevented from leaping into it. O Lord, you saved me from self-destruction (51-55).

   I had resolved that even if the seven seas met to engulf the world or the whole world was submerged under water or the heavens fell in a crash, I would nor face the eventuality of a war with my kith and kin. I was thus plunged headlong in the depths of obstinacy due to

my uncontrollable self-conceit. It was nice that you were standing close to me at this time, otherwise who else could have rescued me? Although a non-entity, I thought myself to be somebody and considered the wrong men as my relations. I was possessed by this great madness, but you saved me from it. When we were on the point of being burnt in the house of lac, you rescued us from there. But then there was only danger to out body, but in this fire of delusion there was a risk of the destruction of my very self (56-60). Just as demon Hiranyakasha had seized the eath in his armpit and hid him in the bottom of the sea, so my perverse obstinacy had smothered my reason in the abyss of delusion. It is through your power that this reason was restored to me, but for that you had to assume a second boar incarnation. This is indeed an incomprehensible feat; how can I describe it in words? I can only say that you have saved my life thereby. The trouble you took for me has nor been wasted, and you have succeeded in destroying my ignorance. How can a person suffer from delusion, after he has received the graceful glance of your eyes, which are like lotuses blooming in the lake of bliss (61-65)? It would be improper to say so. How can the water of mirage quench the submarine fire? O merciful God, I have the innermost sanctuary of your grace and am now experiencing fully the knowledge of Brahman. Is it any wonder then that my delusion is totally dispelled? O God, the merciful touch of your feet has brought about my salvation.

2. *For I have heard in detail from you, O lotus-eyed. (Krishna) of the origin and dissolution of beings and also your entrant glory.*

   O you, Supreme Lord, with lotus eyes and the splendor of ten million sun, I heard from your lips thus. You revealed to me the nature of *Prakriti,* from which all these beings originate and it, which they become, dissolved (66-70). Then after making a though inquiry into this *Prakriti*, you revealed the inner sanctuary of the supreme self. As the Vedas dressed themselves in your glory, the Vedic literature flourished and produced gems of religious truths. All this came about as they had taken refuge at your feet. Thus you revealed to me your supreme unfathomable glory, which is fit for self-realisation through recourse to all paths. One sees the sun as the clouds clear away or clear water as the moss is swept off. One can clasp the sandalwood tree after the serpent's coil round it is unwound or recover the treasure buried underground after the spirit guarding it goes away. In the same way the lord has removed the *Prakriti,* which was screening the knowledge and united me with Brahman. So I am convinced about your power, but at the same time I have become possessed by an intense logging. If I were to feel shy of asking you about it, then whom else can I ask? Except

you, who else is our refuge in this world? If the fish were to feel shy of remaining in water or the infant shrank from sucking at mother's breasts, how will it survive? Therefore, I wish to ask you about something, which is in my mind. No sooner had Arjuna said this than the lord said to him "Enough of this talk, speak out what you wish" (76-80).

3. *Even as you have declared yourself to be, O supreme lord, I desire to see your form divine, o Supreme Person.*

   Then Arjuna said, O Lord, your speech has given me assurance and contentment. By recourse to the universal form, you create this panorama of the world and dissolve it. You call it your original form and by resorting to it, you assume incarnations with two or four hands and descend to the world for performing God's work. Then after you have finished your rest on the sea of milk and your work of incarnations in the form of the fish and tortoise, you resume this original form. Of this the Upanishads sing praises, and the yogis meditate upon it by turning the mind inwards. Sages like Sanaka remain embracing it in a mystic union (81-85). We have been hearing so much about it all these years. I am most eager, O Lord to see this universal form. Since you have pressed me to express my desire without any reserve. I tell you that this is the sole object of my desire. I long to see your universal form with my own eyes.

4. *If you think it possible, O Lord, for me to see it. Then reveal to me, O lord of yoga, and your imperishable self.*

   But, O Lord, I have another doubt. I do not know whether I possess the capacity to see your universal form. If you ask me why I neither do nor know it, can a diseased person diagnose his own illness (86-90)? And, O God, when desire becomes strong, a man forgets his ability or a person who is thirsty thinks that even the sea is nor enough to quench his thirst. I am not stupefied by my intense longing and so do nor know my limitations. Only a mother knows the ability of its child and so, O scorcher of the foes, you should judge my worthiness and show me your universal form. But show me this graceonly in I am worthy of it; if nor, decline it. O Lord, how can one please a deaf person by singing to him a melody consisting of the fifth note? Neither the cloud sends rein to satisfy the thirst of the chataka bird, but does it nor while doing so, pour it for the rest of the world? But if that rain falls on a rock, it runs to waste (91-95). The moonlight is meant for the Chataka bird, but it is nor denied to others. But even that moonlight is of nor avail to one without eyesight. But I am certain that you will as the ignorant. Your Marcy knows no bounds; if you wish to bestow your grace, you do

so without regard to one's deserts. You gave even the holy gift of liberation to your enemies. Even though liberation is difficult to attain, it is at your beck and call and waits upon any soul at your bidding. The demons Putana had come to suckle you with her poisoned teats and kill you, but you rewarded her with blissful union with you along with sages such as sanka (96-100). O lord, when the gods, sages and kings of the three worlds had gathered at the Rajasuya sacrifice, did nor Shishupala, kind of Chedi, rail at you and dishonour you? But you installed such a hardened sinner in your blissful abode. And did the son of uttanpada ever aspire for the position of the pole star? He had entered the forest woods to secure his rightful place on his father's lap, but you gave him a position of honour, beyond even that of the sun or the moon. You are thus the lone giver of assurance to the souls in distress. You granted liberation to Ajamila only because he had uttered your name Narayana, while calling his son at the time of death. You still wear as a decoration the footprint of sage Bhrigu, who had kicked you in the chest. And you hold in your hand the conch, which is the body of your enemy Shankhasura (101-105).

Thus you grant favour even to those who cause injury to you and bestow unmerited grace on the evildoers. You went to Bali to ask for alms and became his door-keeper. When the harlot, who had never worsh1pped you or listened to those who sang your glory, called her parrot fondly by your name, you granted her a home in Vaikuntha. On the slightest pretext you make others come close to you. How then will you treat me differently? The wish-yielding cow by her plentiful milk gives relief to those in distress, how then can her calves suffer the pangs of hunger? So it will never happen that the Lord will not grant my request and will withhold from me his universal form. But my only request is that you should make me worthy of seeing it (106-110). If you are sure that I shall be able to see this revelation, you should fulfil my ardent wish. When Arjuna made this earnest entreaty, the Lord of six divine attributes could not contain himself. Then Arjuna and Lord Krishna appeared as if they were the monsoon and the clould brimful with ambrosial grace or the spring and the cuckoo. More than the sea of milk in which rises high tide at the sight of the full moon, the Lord was overjoyed with redoubled affection for Arjuna, and in that state of ecstatic joy, he said aloud, "O Partha, see these unlimited forms of mine (111-115)." Arjuna had desired to see only one form of God, but the Lord revealed to him that the whole universe is his form. So unbounded is the generosity of the Lord that he bestows a gift thousandfold of what a devotee desires. His deepest mystery which was held back from the thousand-eyed Shesha, hidden from the Vedas and kept secret from his spouse Lakshmi that he disclosed to Arjuna. See

how luck favoured Partha. Just as a person goes into the state of dream from the state of wakefulness and becomes all the things he sees in a dream, so Lord Krishna became the manifold universe (116-120). Then dropping his human form and tearing off the curtain of gross vision, he revealed his cosmic form in its full grandeur. Without even stopping to think whether Arjuna would be able to see this vision with his naked eyes, he said all at once in the ecstasy of love. "Behold these forms of mine."

The blessed Lord said:

5. *Behol4 0 Partha, my forms in hundreds and thousands, various in kind and divine and of various colours and shapes.*

O Arjuna, you asked Me to show you only one form. But what is the sense, if I reveal to you only that? You will see that my cosmic form contains the entire universe. Now see my devine forms, some lean, some fat, some short, some tall, home stout, some slim, some boundless, some impetuous, some frank, some on the move,' some quiet, some indifferent, some loving, some with sharp intelligence, (121-125) some careless, some careful, some beautiful, some grave, some generous, some close-fisted, some wrathful, some tranquil, some conceited, some quiet, some jolly, some noisy, some silent and some gentle, some greedy, some dispassionate, some awake, some asleep, some contented, some distressed and some rejoicing, some unarmed, some armed, some dreadful, some friendly, some horrible, some strange, some lost in meditation, some interested in social work, some lovingly protective, some violently destructive and some mere onlookers (126-130) such are My varied and countless forms. Some of them are lustrous, some of variegated colours, some are like red-hot gold, some are of tawny colour, while some are scarlet like the sky at the time of the sunset, some are pretty as if the universe is bedecked with rubies, while some are of reddish colour like the morning sun. Some are bright like pure crystals, some blue like sapphires, some bright-yellow like shinning gold, some of light complexion like the new clouds, some yellow like the champaka flowers, some green (131-135), some deep red like red-hot copper and some fair like the bright moon. So see these variegated forms of mine. Just as my colours are different, so I have also such beautiful shapes that even cupid has become coy and surrendered to me. Some have an attractive build, some have beautiful figures, as if we have here the treasure-house of the Goddess of love open. Some are plump and shapely, some are hideous; some are long-necked, some with huge heads and some gigantic. In this way I have such varied shapes that they

cannot be counted and in each single organ of each one of my forms you shall see the whole universe (136-140).

6. *Behold the Adityas, the Vasus, the Rudras, the two Ashvins and also the Maruts. Behold, O Bharata, many wonders, never seen before.*

   When I open my eyes, the Adityas come into being and when I shut them, they get dissolved. From the hot breath of my mouth, the eight Vasus including Fire are produced. And when the ends of my eye-brows meet in anger, then from them spring eleven Rudras. From my gentle countenance arise innumerable divine physicians (Ashvini-kumaras) and from my ears winds. Thus from everyone of my limbs gods and siddhas come into being. See here these forms of mine, which are boundless and huge (141-145). See for yourself these forms of mine, of which the Vedas give a very indistinct description, which cannot be seen by Time during its brief life-span, of which even God Brahma could not fathom the depth, and of which the three Vedas had never heard the names. And after seeing them, then enjoy my marvelous divine play and miraculous powers.

7. *Behold now the moving and stationary world, centered here wholly in this body of Mine, O Gudakesha, and whatever else you desire to see.*

   0 Partha, just as tender grass grows at the bottom of the wish-yielding tree, so you will see a universe coming out of every root of hair of my body. Like motes floating through the sunbeams entering through the windows of a house, myriad universes moving through every limb of my form will enter your ken. Behold the Universe which has filled every limb of my form and if you wish to see anything beyond it (146-150), you should have no problem. You will be able to see at ease whatever you wish to see in my body. So said lovingly Lord Krishna in his universal form. But when he cast his glance at Arjuna whether he saw his universal form or not, he found that he was sitting quiet. He was sitting as he was before, hoping to see his universal form.

8. *But you cannot see Me with just these eyes of yours. I give you the divine sight; behold my Supreme Yoga.*

   Then the Lord said to himself, "I see that his desire to see the universal form has not decreased, nor does he seem to be delighted after seeing it. No doubt, I have revealed to him my universal form, but he does not see it." So saying, the Lord smiled

and said, "I showed you my universal form, but you are not looking at it (151-155). On this sharp-witted Arjuna said, "0 Lord, whose fault is it? You gave the drink of moon-light to a crane instead of a chakora bird. It is as if you are holding a mirror after cleansing it before a blind person, or singing a sweet melody to the deaf or giving the pollen of flowers to the toad (instead of a bee). Why then are you cross that all that has gone waste? The Shastras declare that this universal form is imperceptible to the senses. If you place before my physical eyes what can be seen only by the eye of wisdom, how do you expect me to see it? I must, therefore, suffer mutely, as I cannot point out your failing in this regard." Hearing this, the Lord said, "I concede everything that you say (156-160). Before revealing my universal form, I should have given you the necessary capability to see it. But I forgot to do so in the ecstatic delight of my affection for you. If a creeper is planted in the soil without tilling it, it runs to waste. This is what happened in this case. I shall now endow you with the vision in order to let you see my universal form. With the aid of that vision, you should see my universal form. With the aid of that vision, you should see the grandeur of my Yoga through experience." Thus spoke Lord Krishna, the primeval Person, worthy of being adored by the whole world.

Sanjaya said:

9. *After saying this, O Shri Hari, the great Lord of Yoga, revealed to Partha his supreme divine form,*

Then Sanjaya said, "O paramount Ruler of the Kurus, this fact amazes me every now and then. Is there anyone more fortunate than goddess Lakshmi in all the three worlds (161-165)? Is there anyone on this earth except Vedas, which can describe the Supreme Self through the medium of signs? What can be deemed as true personal service belongs to Shesha, is it not so? Who is there, who can outdo Garuda in giving service throughout the day like a Yogi? But the Lord overlooked all this and ever since their birth, the Pandavas alone shared his abundant love. Like an amorous person who is completely under the thumb of his beloved, Lord Krishna became subject to Arjuna among the Pandavas, so much so that even a tutored parrot would not speak nor a pet animal perform to the tune of its master. It amazes me how fate could become so propitious to Arjuna (166-170). He alone had the fortune of feasting his eyes on the grand vision of Brahman. See how the Lord ministers to his fondest wishes. The Lord bears silently his angry rebuffs and begins to pacify him if he is displeased. See how the Lord has become crazy after Arjuna.

Great sages like Shukacharya, who had conquered the senses from their very birth, became his bards and sang rhapsodies of his amorous sports with cowherdesses in Gokul. O king, likewise, the Lord is the supreme treasure in which the Yogis become absorbed through meditation. It is, therefore, a wonder to me how he became so amenable to Arjuna". Sanjaya further added, "What is there to wonder at? Fate smiles at him who is chosen by Lord Krishna (171-175)". Then the God of gods said to Partha, "I shall now bestow upon you the divine vision by which you will be able to see my entire universal form."

No sooner had the Lord uttered these words than the darkness of ignorance began to vanish. They were not mere words, but in truth the Lord had kindled spiritual lights to reveal to Arjuna the grandeur of the universal form Arjuna's eye of wisdom opened out widely on all s1des in the flash of that divine vision, and then the Lord revealed to him the grandeur of his cosmic form. This vision vouchsafed to Arjuna seemed like an infinite ocean of which his incarnations are the mere tides or the rays of the sun before which the whole world looks like a mirage (176-180) or the eternal ground, on which is painted as on a canvas, the whole creation. Once the Lord, while yet a child had swallowed earth and angry Yashoda, his foster-mother, had caught hold of him to punish him. At that time, he uttered the words, "I have not eaten the earth," in trepidation and opening his mouth to establish his innocence, he had shown the fourteen regions of the universe to Yashoda. Likewise when the Lord touched the cheek of Dhruva with his conch in the Madhuvana, he began to utter spiritual truths, which lay beyond the grasp of the Vedas. So, when Parth received the grace of Shri Hari, he could And no trace of Maya anywhere (181-185). In the splendour of the divine creative power, he saw marvels everywhere and his mind was plunged in wonderment. Just as sage Markandeya was alone floating on the waters which had filled the world right upto Satyaloka, so Arjuna was now lost in the divine play of the universal form. He said, "What an immense expanse of sky was here! Who has whisked it away and where? Where has the world, both moving and stationary, gone? The four quarters are nowhere to be seen; one does not know where the upper and nether regions have gone. Just as the dream would disappear in the waking state, the visible world has vanished. Or just as the moon and the stars disappear in the sunlight, this whole created world has been enveloped by the universal form (186-190). The mind of Arjuna lost its bearings, his intellect became overwrought and all the outgoing functions of his senses turned inwards to fill up his mind. The quiescence and concentration of his mind reached the furthest limit and all his thoughts were charmed away as if by a

bewitching missile (mohanastra). Then he started looking on all sides in amazement. He saw that the four-armed figure of Lord Krishna before him had spread in myriad forms everywhere. As the clouds fill the sky in monsoon or the splendour of the sun grows and envelops the world at the time of dissolution, the Lord filled the entire universe with his universal form and left nothing there. At first the sight of this revelation gave immense satisfaction to Arjuna, and when he opened his eyes he saw before him the universal form (191-195). In this way, his ardent desire to see the cosmic form of God with his own eyes was fulfilled by Lord Krishna.

10. *possessing many faces and eyes, displaying many marvelous sights, wearing many heavenly ornaments and holding many upraised celestial weapons,*

Then he saw myriad faces there, which looked as if they were royal mansions of the Lord of goddess Lakshmi, c treasure-houses of things of beauty flung wide open. He saw there the faces of Shri Hari, as if they were blossoming woodlands of bliss or sublime beauty crowned and enthroned. But amidst these faces he also saw some horrid faces, as if they were the legions of grim death rushing out to destroy the world, or as if they were the yawning jaws of death, or the forts built by horror or the great pits of world conflagration spitting out fire (196-200). He also saw there some singular faces, which were bedecked and serene. Indeed even to his eye of wisdom, the end of these faces remained out of sight. Then out of curiosity he turned his gaze towards the eyes of the universal form. He saw there myriad eyes which resembled beds of full-blown lotuses of varied colours or which looked splendid like sunbeams. There beneath the eyebrows there beamed fiery eyes of fawny colour which looked like lightning flashes ensuing from dark clouds at the time of deluge. After seeing everyone of the marvels in that revelation, Partha came to realise that there were innumerable sights. 1n that divine vision (201-205). Then he felt an intense longing to see the - whereabouts of his feet, crown and arms. But how could the desires of Partha, fortune's favourite, and fail to be fulfilled? Could the quiver of Lord Shiva ever contain futile arrows? Or could the lips of God Brahma utter fallacious words? Arjuna saw the beginning and end of that unlimited universal form. His sight feasted on limbs of that vision which even the Vedas could not fathom. He saw the majesty of that cosmic form which was decked with ornaments studded with different kinds of jewels (206-210). How can I describe those ornaments fashioned by Brahman itself out of its own being, with which to deck itself? That glorious splendour provides the light by which the sun and the moon shine and the universe is created and sustained. Who has

the intellect to dive into that decorated state of the cosmic form, which is the essence of that divine light? Arjuna saw that the Lord has fashioned the ornaments out of himself and worn them. Then he saw with the eye of wisdom that the hands of the cosmic form were straight and held weapons which flashed like the flames of world-conflagration. Then he discovered that the Supreme Lord himself had filled the world, by himself becoming his hands, weapons, his body and soul (211-215) As a result of his fierce rays even the stars crumbled to pieces like parched gram and even Are, scorched by his luster, entered the sea. Thus, Arjuna saw his innumerable hands with uplifted weapons which looked like spurts of deadliest poison or thickets of lightning flashes at the conflagration of world.

11. *Wearing heavenly garlands and robes, anointed with divine perfumes verily the God was full of all marvels, infinite and with faces turned everywhere.*

    Then withdrawing his gaze from there 1n fear, Arjuna glanced at his neck and crown wreathed in flowers. Arjuna mused with wonder whether they were the source from which the wish-yielding tree had sprung. He saw the Lord wearing on his head incomparable lotuses, where goddess Lakshmi, the fountain of the great occult powers, takes her rest when tired. Lord had flower-bouquets on his crown, floral bracelets on his limbs and wreaths round his neck (216-220). With the yellowish silken dhoti round his waist he shone like the heaven encircled by sunlight or the Meru mountain lined with gold. Arjuna saw that the body of the Supreme Person anointed with sandal-paste looked like Shiva smeared with camphor or Kailasa lined with mercury or the milky sea covered with milk or the sky overlaid with a cloth formed by unfolding the moon. Who can describe that superb fragrance, which adds luster to light, cools the heat of divine ecstasy, embalms the natural smell of the earth and excels the other scents in purity and the aroma which adorns the very person of cupid (221-225)? When Arjuna saw the beauty of Lord's bedecked form he was so bewildered that he could not make out if the Lord was seated or standing or lying down. When he opened his eyes wide, he saw everywhere only the universal form. When he shut his eyes and remained still, he saw the same form in his mind. When to avoid seeing innumerable faces in front, he turned his back in fear, he beheld the same innumerable faces, hands and feet. Is there any wonder then if Arjuna saw the all-pervading cosmic form with open eyes? But that it should become visible even when he had shut his eyes, is it not amazing? The grace of the Lord is such that his vision filled the mind of Arjuna, whether he saw it or not (226-230). So no sooner

did he land on the shore from a flood of wonders, then he found himself thrown headlong 1nto an ocean of miracles. In this way Lord Krishna revealed very skillfully his universal form and filled the mind of Arjuna with his myriad forms. He was by nature pervader of the universe facing on all sides, and as Arjuna had entreated him to show him His cosmic form, he readily assumed that form. The sight which Lord Krishna gave to Arjuna was not the sight which sees with the daylight or candle-light, by which he could only see when his eyes were open and not when they were shut. So Arjuna could see the vision with his eyes open or shut or even in darkness, so said Sanjaya to Dhritarshtra in Hastinapur (231-235). He said, "O King, did you hear? Partha beheld the universal form of the Lord with myriad faces deeked with ornaments of varied kinds."

12. *If the light of a thousand suns were to blaze forth in. the sky all at once, it might be somewhat like the radiance of that Supreme Self.*

    How can I describe to you the nature of that universal form? At the time of world conflagration, it is said that twelve suns come together to destroy the universe. Even if such thousand suns were to rise together, their cumulative light could not equal the luster of that form. If all the lightnings in the world were to gather together and combine with the world-consuming fire and the ten suns at the time of dissolution, their light would pale before the radiant beauty of that form and certainly would not equal it in purity (236-240). Such is the glory of Shri Hari. I could behold the radiant beauty of that form only through the grace of sage Vyasa".

13. *There in the body of the God of gods, Pandu's son (Arjuna) then beheld the whole universe centered with its myriad divisions.*

    Arjuna beheld the whole universe with its expanse in that universal form. Like bubbles on the face of the ocean, or the imaginary city of the clouds in the sky, or ant-hills on the earth or particles of dust on a mountain, Arjuna saw this whole universe in the body of Lord Krishna, God of gods.

14. *Then overwhelmed with wonder, Arjuna, with hair standing on end, bowed his head before the Lord and said with folded hands.*

    Now whatever notion of duality that he was different from the world which still lingered in him disappeared and Arjuna's mind was dissolved in the form (241-245). Inwardly his heart was filled with rapture, while his outer senses became benumbed. His hair stood on end from top to toe like the shoots of grass springing all over the surface of a mountain washed by the onset of monsoon. And like

the moon-stone which melts at the touch of moon-light, Arjuna's body was covered with drops of sweat. As the lotus bud sways too and fro by a bee caught therein, Arjuna's body was shaking with the ripples of his inner rapturous joy. Just as the camphor tree, overful with camphor, bursts out of its skin and sheds camphor flakes, so there trickled drops of tears from his eyes (246-250). His mind surged with the wave of ecstatic joy like the ocean swelling to flood-tide at rise of the moon. So the eight sattvic sentiments vied with one another to flood the mind of Arjuna, as a result of which he began to enjoy the sovereign bliss of divine ecstasy. But even in that blissful union with God, Arjuna still retained a feeling of otherness from God. Then heaving a sigh, he looked around and after bowing down his head, he began to speak with folded hands.

Arjuna said:

15. *Lord, I see, within your body, all gods and hosts of beings of different species, Lord Brahma seated on his lotus seat, seers all and Nagas divine.*

    Arjuna said: 0 Lord, glory to you! Because of your grace ordinary people like me have been able to see your universal form (251-255). O my Master, you did another good thing, which gave me great joy. It is that I saw with my own eyes that you are the support of this created world. O God just as there are forests inhabited by beasts on the plateau of a mountain, I see on your body innumerable worlds. Like the cluster of planets in the sky or birds' nests on a big tree, gods and heavens are seen on your body. O Lord, I see in your body all the Ave gross elements as well as the creatures which are their products (256-260). So there is also Satyaloka in your body, and is he not the same god Brahma? If I look in the other direction, I see Kailasa with Lord Shiva and goddess Parvati in another part of your body. Not only this, but, O Lord, I see you also in your body. The families of Kashyapa and other seers and the nether world along with the Nagas are also to be seen in your universal form. Why need I say more? ' 0 Lord of the universe, all the fourteen worlds ' seem to be portrayed on the wall in the form of each one of your limbs and all the innumerable denizens of these worlds are to be seen in these portraits. I am thus beholding the fathomless glory of your being (261-265).

16. *I see you everywhere of infinite form, with many arms, bellies, mouths and eyes. I do not see Your end, or the middle or the beginning, 0 Lord of the universe, of universal form.*

When I see all around with the aid of my divine sight, I see your arms like sprouts of the sky. At this time, 0 God, all your hands seem to be carrying on their operations all at once. I see also your limitless bellies as if they are the treasures of the worlds opened in the sky. The mouths of your myriad heads seem like fruits borne by this tree of Brahman. I also behold innumerable mouths and unlimited rows of eyes in this universal form (266-270). Not only this, but I see this whole universe in your body, with the annihilation of all distinctions of heaven, earth and the nether world, the quarters and the sky. I cannot find even an iota of space which is not filled by you; you are so all-pervasive. I see that you have pervaded all the innumerable creatures of different kinds. I then began to think of whence you came, whether you are seated or standing here, what mother's womb bore you, what is your place, figure and age, what is beyond you and what is your support (271-275). Then I came to realise that you are your own support and that you are unborn, beginningless and self-existent. O Lord, you are neither sitting nor standing, you are neither tall nor short, and you are over and beneath yourself only. If I am asked what is your figure and age, I can say that it is exactly like yourself and like nothing else. O God, you are at the front and in the rear of yourself. O boundless Lord, whatever I see around me, you are all that. But I see only one flaw in your universal form. It is this that it has no beginning nor middle nor end (276-280). I searched for them in all places, but could not fathom their depth. I have no doubt now that your form does not possess any of them. O you limitless Lord of the world, who have no beginning, middle or end, I saw your real universal form in this manner.

On your universal form innumerable figures are visible, as though you have donned a garment of variegated colours. Just as trees and creepers, when laden with flowers and fruits, look beautiful, all these figures on your person seem splendid with their ornaments. O God, you are like an ocean, on which these figures look like ripples, or you are like a beautiful tree laden with fruits in the form of these figures (281-285). Just as the earth is filled with creatures or the sky is studded with stars, so is your universa1 form filled with these figures. A universe is produced from each one of your figures and gets dissolved in them, and all these figures are as many as hairs on your body. Then I ask myself, "Who is the person who has set up this vast expanse of the universe? To whom does he belong'"? When I muse like this, I realise that you are none other than my charioteer. O Mukunda, though you are all-pervalding, you assume this comely human form to bestow grace on your devotees. My mind and eyes are thoroughly pleased at the sight of your four-armed form of light complexion and if I wish, I can clasp it with my

two hands (286-290). O universal Presence, you assume this comely form only to grant favours to your devotees. But we call it ordinary human form because of our defective sight. But after you gave me divine vision, I have overcome this deficiency and realised your true glory. But I readily recognised that you, who had sat in the hind part of the crocodile-shaped yoke of the chariot, have assumed this universal form.

17. *I see you with a crown, a mace and a discus, a shining mass of light on all sides, so difficult to behold all round, immeasurable, blazing like the fire or the sun.*

    O Shri Hari, is this not the crown that you were wearing on your head? But its luster and size are breath-taking. Is this not the discus, which is revolving in your hand? That you are trying to steady it indicates that it is the same discus which you had before (291-295). Is this not the same mace which you had before in your second hand? For, O Govinda, you are moving forward your two lower hands to reign the horses. O Lord of the universe, I appreciate fully that you assumed this universal form in order to fulfil my desire. But what a miracle! I am not worthy even to feel surprised to see this form. My mind is bewildered at the sight of this miracle. I have no time even to think whether your form is here or not. The marvellous thing about your radiant form is that it has filled this world. Before its marvelous and fierce luster even the sight of fire would become dazzled or the sun would look as dim as a glow-worm (296-300). It appears as though this world is engulfed in your effulgent light or the entire sky is covered by world-destroying lightning or a bed-stead has been built high in the sky by means of world-consuming flames. I cannot bear to see your radiant form even with my divine sight. That radiance is getting increasingly fierce and scalding, so much so that a mere glance at it troubles my divine sight. It seems as if the third eye of Lord Shiva has opened and let out the world-consuming fire which lay smouldering in it. Likewise, it looks as if the whole world is caught in the all-consuming flames of the Ave fires and is being reduced to charcoal (301-305). For the first time I have set my eyes on this marvelous and radiant form of yours. Verily this all-pervasive radiance of your universal form has no limits.

18. *You are the Imperishable, the Supreme Truth to be known, and the ultimate repose of this universe. You are the undecaying guardian of the eternal Lam. You are the Primeval Person, so I believe.*

    O Lord, you are the Imperishable Supreme Brahman, and are beyond the three and half syllables of Om and the Vedas are in

eternal quest of your abode. You are the origin of all appearance and also their only place of repose. You are that eternal, fathomless and indestructible Being. You are the fountain of religion, self-existent and eternally new. You are the Lord of this universe, the Supreme Person, the thirty- seventh beyond the thirty-six principles.

19. *(I see you) as Almighty, without beginning, middle or end, with innumerable arms, with the sun and the moon as your eyes; I see your mouths as blazing fires, scorching this world with your incandescence.*

    You have no beginning, middle or end and your might is unlimited. You have hands and feet everywhere (306-310). The sun and the moon are your eyes and through them you engage in your sportive play of mercy and wrath. You chastise one with your wrathful gaze, while you protect another with your gracious glance. O Lord, I see your universal form in various ways. Your face is like the fire which blazes at the time of dissolution. As the wild flames of forest- fire on the mountains envelop all things which come in their way, your tongue rolls between the rows of teeth, licking the jaws. The whole universe is singed in the radiant heat of your mouth and tormented by the bright luster of your form.

20. *You fill this space between heaven and earth, as also all quarters, alone. Seeing your wondrous (but) dredful form the three worlds tremble, 0 Supreme Self.*

    And I behold that you alone have filled up the heaven, earth, the space between them, the nether world, all the ten quarters and the horizon (314-315). It is as though the whole universe along with the sky is plunged in your dreadful form or all the fourteen regions are caught in the waves in the ocean of the marvelous sentiment. How can I comprehend your astound1ng miraculous form? Your grand all-pervading form defies the power of imagination and the fierce heat of your radiant form is also beyond endurance. All talk of happiness at the sight of your cosm1c form is at an end; on the other hand, the world is struggling for its very life. It is a mystery to me as to how your marvelous form has caused this terror, but all the three worlds are engulfed in the waves of great sorrow due to this terror. But then why should the world be plunged in terror and unhappiness at the sight of your magnanimous form? But I feel that your vision will not make anyone happy (316-320). So long as I had not set my eyes on your universal form, the worldly pleasures tasted sweet, but now that I have seen your form, they seem abhorrent and frightful. If out of fright, I 'wished to clasp your form in

my arms, how can I do so? And if I am denied this pleasure of hugging you, how can I take courage in this gruesome plight? A retreat at this stage is not possible because of the uncontrollable worldly existence. And if I wish to go ahead, I cannot hold your gigantic form in my arms. Alas, this poor mortal world, caught between two stools of dangers, is becoming like parched grain. Thus my desire to see your universal form has reduced me to this sorry plight. As if one scorched by fire were to rush to the sea to cool his burns and become frightened by its rushing waves (321-325), similar is the condition of the world now. The whole universe is distressed to see your cosmic form.

21. *Yonder the hosts of gods enter you; some in fear praise you with folded hands. Saying "All hail" bands of great seers and siddhas sing your glory in many a psalm.*

    Now see yonder the hosts of gods. Some have burnt their seeds of actions in your effulgence and have become merged in your being with loving devotion. Still others are frightened and have folded their hands in prayer. They are praying, -0 Lord, we are plunged in this ocean of ignorance and ' caught in the snares of worldly pleasures. We have fallen between the two stools of the heavenly joy and wordily pleasures. Who but you will deliver us from this plight? We have, therefore, resigned wholeheartedly to your will" (326-330). O God, there are also here assemblages of great seers like Kashyapa, siddhas like Kapila, and bands of semi-divine beings (vidyadharas) saying, 'All hail' to you and praising your name.

22. *Rudras, Adityas, Vasus and Sadhyas, Vishve devas, the two Ashvins, Maruts and Manes, Gandharvas, Yckshas, Asuras and Siddhas all behold you spell-bound.*

    The eleven Rudras, twelve Adityas, eight Vasus, demigods known as Sadhyas, two Ashvins, the Vishvedevas and Maruts (Storm-gods), as also Manes, celestial singers, Yakshas, dernons, gods headed by Indra and all Siddhas are looking at your divine revelation with great longing from their regions. O Lord, all of them are looking at you with amazement and are bowing down their heads before you (331-335). The heaven is resounding with the loud acclamations uttered in melodious tones by them with folded hands touching their heads in salutation. Just as the sylvan trees, aided by the vernal season, sprout into foliage and bear fruit, their devout supplication, aided by the eight expressions of pious emotions (sattvika bhavas) has resulted in their joining the palms of their hands and has borne fruit in the form of this vision.

23. *Beholding your mighty form with its myriad eyes and mouths, with myriad arms, thighs and feet, O mighty armed (Krishna), with many bellies and fearful teeth, the worlds are in panic and so am I.*

    In this way fortune has favoured them and a blissful day has dawned on them, since they could see the vision of your divine cosmic form. Seeing this form of yours pervading all the three worlds, even the gods stand in awe. For from wherever a person sees it, he sees it facing him. Although it is a single Presence, it has myriad, variegated arid dreadful mouths and eyes and innumerable hands holding weapons (336-340). It bears numerous handsome arms, feet, bellies and different colours. But its each single mouth looks intoxicated with excitement as though at the end of the world dissolution the wrathful god of death has kindled fires (as at Holi festival) all around, or the destructive weapons of Lord Shiva, or the bands of world-destroying Bhairavas (who attend on Lord Shiva) or the maids of world-destroying Power (Shakti) have set out to destroy living creatures. I see here your gaping mouths from which the teeth are sticking out in a dreadful manner like ferocious lions out of their dens. Just as destructive spirits roam about 1n great glee in the darkness of the world-destroying night, so your jaws appear to be pitch-black as a result of your sucking blood at the time of world-destruction (341-345). In short, as if the world-destroyer Time has given a clarion call for war or death has engulfed all creatures at the time of world-destruction, your fierce mouths are spreading terror. Oh, this poor created world! Even if you look at it curiously, you will And that it has shrivelled through misery 11ke the trees on the banks of the river Yamuna (scorched by the poison of cobra Kaliya). In this great ocean of your vision in the form of universal destruction, the tiny boat in the form of the created world is being tossed about in the storm of sorrow. On this, O God, you may chide me in wrath and forbid me to think of the world's agony, but to enjoy in peace the meditation of your cosmic form. But, O Lord, my description of the world's agony is only a smoke-screen for my plight; in truth, it is I who am shaken w1th fear (346-350). Though the world-destroying Rudra stands in awe of me, and god of death hides himself in fear, I am reduced to this pitiable plight, in which I am shaken by fright both in and out. And you call it your divine cosmic form. Is it not strange that you should call it by this name, even though it beats terror hollow by its dreadful effulgence? It 1s the great ravager which 1s causing havoc.

24. *Seeing you brushing the sky, ablaze with many colours, with gaping mouths and large flashing eyes, mg innermost self is quaking, O Vishnu; I find neither firmness nor peace.*

You have several angry faces, which are as though beating the great Destroyer with a wager and they are so large that even the sky appears stunted before them. Even the vast expanse of the sky cannot enfold them nor can the wind careering through the three worlds encase them. On the other hand, the vapours coming out of those mouths is buring fire itself and spitting out blaz1ng flames. Again, not one face is like another; they are of diverse colours. One wonders whether the world-destroying fire at the time of dissolution takes the form of these fire-spitting mouths (351-355).

Its radiant effulgence is such that it is reducing the three worlds to ashes. It has also mouths which contain both teeth and jaws. It is as though the wind should suffer from convulsions, or the sea should suffer in great flood or the fire of deadly poison should destroy the submarine Are or the deadly poison should swallow fire or death should start an unrelenting holocaust, so this all-destroying effulgence of the universal form has put forth fiery mouths. Your mouths are so large as though the sky has cracked, producing great gaps in it or Lord Shiva has opened a hole in the nether world to let in Hiranyaksha, who had seized the earth in his armpit and wanted to take shelter underground (356-360).' Likewise your mouths have spread out and your tongues are rolling and lolling therein. As the universe will not make even a single morsel for it, they have not made an attempt to munch it. The tongues are lolling 1n the valleys of your mouths like poisonous flames from the hissing dragons in the nether world reaching out to the sky. The tips of sharp jaws sticking out of the lips look like bastions with the bands of world-consuming lightnings at the time of dissolution. The eyes looking out of the hollow in the forehead like billows of death hiding in darkness are frightening terror itself.

I do not know what you are going to achieve by wearing this mask of terror. But one thing is certain, I am feeling the dread of death (361-365). I longed to see your universal form and that longing of mine has been well fulfilled. My eyes are sated with joy by seeing your cosmic form. I do not care if this earthy body of mine perishes. But I fear now whether my soul would remain intact. Because of this terror my body is shaking, my mind is in anguish, and my intellect in unnerved, as a result of which I have lost my bearings. But now even the blissful and motionless Self, which is beyond all these is full of tremours. O Lord, the passion to see your universal form had seized me, but its vision has dislodged my knowledge. And I am afraid whether my tie of discipleship with you will also last (366-370). After seeing your cosmic form, my mind has become despondent and I am making a frantic effort to revive my courage. I had already lost courage and then I have had his vision of your

universal form. Be that as it may, your instruction has bewildered me. My poor soul is running wild in search of a haven of rest but Ands it not. This divine form of yours is a great killer and the life of the universe itself is in peril. How then can I live, if I remain quiet?

25. *Looking at your mouth with fearful teeth, resembling the fire of dissolution, I know no quarters nor find comfort. Have mercy, 0 Lord of gods, 0 Abode of the world.*

Like the vessels of terror which have burst before our eyes, your gigantic gaping mouths have spread before our view (371-375). And the teeth and the jaws are too dense in the mouth covered by the lips, which form as it were a thick hedge of world-destroying weapons. Your formidable mouths exuding vehemence are like Takshaka cobra filled with venom, or the new moon night possessed by ghosts or the world- destroying fire flourishing fiery missiles, so the vehemence of your huge mouths is overflowing and making me feel as if deadly torrents of water are flooding us. If the whirlwind and the world-destroying fire at the time of dissolution come together, will anything remain unburnt? Likewise seeing your destructive mouths I have lost my courage; a grievous delusion has came upon me and I have lost my bearings regarding the quarters and my whereabouts (376-380). No sooner did I get a cursory glimpse of your form, the fount of my happiness has dried up.

Now, therefore, please withdraw this unwieldy form of yours. Would I have broached this matter with you, if I had the slighest indication of what you were upto? Now save our lives on this occasion from this world-destroying cosmic form of yours. If you are really our Master, protect my life by holding back your sprawling form. You are the life and the abode of this whole universe. You seem to be unmindful of this and have undertaken the work of destruction. O God, extend your grace immediately and, withdrawing your Maya, relieve us from this great terror (381-385). I have been making these piteous entreaties all along, because this gigantic form of yours frightens me. When the demons laid seize to the city of Indra, I lifted it alone in defiance of death. But your cosmic form is not a thing of that kind, because you have outdone death itself and set about gulping us all including the universe. Even though the time is not ripe for world-dissolution, you have descended upon us as the destroyer. As a result, this poor universe has become short-lived. Alas, how perverse 1s the course of fate! I sought the vision of your cosmic form in the hope of attaining blissful peace, but what a disaster has come upon us! Alas, this world is as good as lost, because you yourself are ready to gobble it (386-390). What is this

that I see? Are you not opening your myriad mouths wide and swallowing both the armies, lock stock and barrel?

26. *And here all sons of Dhritarashtra along with hosts of kings of earth, Bhishma, Drona and the son of the charioteer (Karna) along with our prominent warriors*

Are these not the warriors of the Kuru race, the sons of blind Dhritarashtra? These too have entered along with their retinue in your mouth. And many kings came from other countries to help the Kauravas but none has remained to carry the news of their fate to their respective homes. You are thus swallowing up all of them indiscriminately. You are gulping down the herds of elephants in rut and you are se1zing the armies which are deployed on the field of battle. Swarms of soldiers from artillery and infantry are rushing into your mouths (391-395). Myriads of deadly weapons are being swallowed by you, and each single weapon 1s capable of destroying the entire universe. You are also consum1ng hastily the armies consisting of elephants, cavalry, chariots and infantry including chariots with horses harnessed to them without even touching them with your teeth. O Lord, how do you get pleasure from all this?

Here is Bhishmacharya than whom there is no better speaker of truth and brave warrior. But you have swallowed him up along with the Brahmin Dronacharya. Alas, the great warrior Karna, born of the Sun, has rushed into your mouth and I see that all warriors from our side also are blown off like straw. O my God, how strange is this outcome of divine grace! I prayed to God for a vision of his universal form and brought down this death and destruction on the whole universe (396-400). Before this the Lord had recounted to me his principal manifestations, but I could not see the all-pervading God before me, so I entreated him to show me his cosmic form. But no one can avoid what is orda1ned by fate and what is ordained by fate shapes our will. How then can I escape from the guilt which people will lay on my head? In days of yore, the gods acquired nectar by churning the milky ocean, but not content with it they went on churning it until the ocean delivered deadly poison. In a way that disaster was less troublesome as it could be warded off, and Lord Shiva saved the world from that danger. But this present disaster is like a blazing whirlwind; who can bring it under control? Who can gulp down the vault of heaven brimful with poison? Who indeed has the gigantic strength to wrestle with the great Destroyer? (401-405) (Jnanadeva says), in this way did Arjuna grieve over the great vision. As yet he was not aware of the Lord's intention, as he was seized by the great delusive 1mpression

that he was the slayer and the Kauravas the slain. The Lord showed him his cosmic form to clear that delusion. Under the cover of that vision he brought home to Arjuna the great truth that no one other than Him is the slayer. But Arjuna could not grasp this truth, and was unnecessarily suffering from agony and terror.

27. *They are rushing headlong into your mouths striking terror with fearful teeth. Some of them who are caught between your teeth are seen with their heads crushed into bits and pieces.*

On that occasion, he (Arjuna) said: "0, Lord, look here; like clouds dissolving in the sky, the armies on both sides have disappeared in your mouths with their swords and armours (406-410). Just as twenty-one heavens alongwith the nether worlds are swallowed by the great Destroyer in wrath at the time of dissolution, or the riches of a miser vanish all of a sudden due to an adverse fate, so the armies which have assembled here have disappeared into your mouths and none of the warriors has emerged safely out of your clutches. See how inscrutable are the ways of providence! Like the twigs of Ashoka tree chewed by the camels, all these men are rushing into your mouths to their destruction.

It is seen that their crowned heads are pounded between the pincers of your jaws (411-415). The crown jewels have been caught and crushed in the interstices of your teeth and the bottom of the tongue as well as the tips of the jaws are smeared with their powder. Although the great Destroyer in the form of this vision has swallowed the bodies and strength of men, he has preserved their skeletons and head which are the best parts of their bodies." Arjuna went on: "Is there no other course for the creatures who are born? The entire world is falling 1nto the deep waters 1n the form of - the mouth of the cosrnic form. The whole creation is entering your mouth and the Supreme Destroyer is standing unmoved and swallowing it with ease (416-420). Brahma and other gods are rush1ng into his uppermost mouth, while others are entering the mouths lower down. Some of h1s mouths are destroying creatures as soon as they are born. None escapes from the clothes of his mouths.

28. *As many river currents rush towards the sea, so these heroic warriors on the earth are flinging themselves into your flaming mouths.*

Just as the courses of the big rivers move towards the sea, so the ent1re world from all sides is rushing into your mouths. All the groups of created beings, who are moving along the way of life and

treading the steps of day and night, are ending their journey by entering your mouths.

29. *As moths fly with full speed into the blazing fire towards destruction, so these men make haste to enter Your mouths to perish there.*

Like swarms of moths falling into the valleys of burntng mounta1ns, all these men are rushing 1nto your mouths (421-425). But whoever enters these mouths, their very life is blotted out as the water dries up on red-hot iron.

30. *You are licking Your lips, devouring all the worlds with Your flaming mounts on all sides. Filling the entire worlds with their radiance, Your fearful rays are scorching it, 0 Vishnu.*

And your ravenous hunger is not appeased by swallowing all .the worlds. What is it that has fed the flames of your gastric Are? Like a patient recovering from illness or a famine-stricken beggar craves for food, your tongues are lolling out and licking the lips. Nothing that is esatable has escaped from your mouth. How extraordinary is this hunger of yours, how voracious it is as though you are impatient to gulp down the seas, to make a mouthful of the mountains, to grind the whole world in your jaws (426-430], to swallow all the quarters or to consume the starry vault; such seems to be your greed. Just as desire is fed by sensual enjoyment or Are is fed by firewood, so the more you eat, the more ravenous becomes your hunger. See how wide your single mouth has opened, so that the entire universe is resting on the tip of your tongue, as if it is a wood-apple thrown into the sub-marine fire. But you possess mayriad mouths. where can we find worlds to feed them? And why have you created so many mouths without providing for their food and drink?

The blazing fires ensuing from your mouths encircle this poor universe. As though the deers are caught in a forest-conflagration (431-435), such is the plight of this world. You are not the Supreme Spirit, but relentless destiny dodging our footsteps, as though the Great Destroyer has spread his net to catch Ash in the form of the world. How can this world come out of the net spread by the blazzing mouths of your cosmic form'? These are not mouths, but they are craters of flaming fires. The fire knows not 1ts scorching power, yet whatever creature is caught in the Are loses it life. Just as a sharp weapon or poison does not know its lethal power, you are totally unaware of your feroc1ty. But the whole universe is perishing 1n the cavern of your mouth on this side, (436-440). O Lord, you alone are Brahman, which pervades this universe; then

why have you become all-destroyer? I have given all hope of remaining alive and would request you to disclose your intention frankly without deference to me. How much are you going to extend this ferocious form of yours'? O God, remember your divine nature and extend your grace to me.

31. *Reveal to me mho You are in this dreaded form. My obeisance to You, have mercy, 0 great Lord, I seek to know You, the Primeval One, for I fail to comprehend Your intent.*

    You are known only to the Vedas, the adorable One of the universe and the origin of the three worlds. O God, hear this request of mine. Saying this Arjuna prostrated his head on the feet of Lord Krishna and said: 0 God of gods, please, pay your attention (441-445). I prayed to you to reveal your universal form to derive peace of mind, but you have all of a sudden become ready to make a mouthful of the universe. Tell me who you are and why you have gathered these dreadful mouths and held so many weapons in your hands. What is your intention in getting angry with us, in growing taller than the sky and staring at us angrily? Why are you, 0 God, vying with the Destroyer in annihilating the world'? What is your purpose in doing so, tell me." Hearing this speech of Arjuna, Lord Krishna said, "You ask me who I am and why I have grown this ferocious form, hear then". (446-450)

    The blessed Lord said:

32. *Time I am, ripe to destroy the world, set out to annihilate the creatures. Of all the warriors ranged here for fight, none excepting you will survive;*

    I am, indeed. the Destroyer and I am growing up to annihilate the world. My mouths have spread everywhere and 1 am going to swallow all the worlds. Hearing this, Arjuna said to himself, "Alas, in order to escape from the disaster (of extinction of my race), I prayed to Lord Krishna to show me his universal form, but he revealed this dreadful form." But anticipating that his harsh speech would cause anguish and distress to him, Lord Krishna said, "0 Arjuna, there is another thing. All of you, Pandavas, will survive this universal destruction." Hearing these words, Arjuna got a fresh lease of life, which was almost on the point of breathing its last. Arjuna, who was caught in the grip of Death, the Ravager, came to his senses and began to listen to the Lord with attention (451-455). The Lord said at that time, : O Arjuna, keep in mind that you, Pandavas, are dear to me, so I am going to swallow all the rest. Like a lump of butter fallen into the gigantic Are of lightning the

universe, as you saw, entered into my mouth; Nothing of it will survive this holocaust. The armies are vainly indulging in empty chatter. The warriors who have assembled here are boasting of their valour and saying that their army of elephants surpasses god of death in destruction. On the strength of their four-limbed army, they are puffed up with the pride of their prowess and vying with the Destroyer. They are bragging that they would create a new world, slay Death himself with a wager and drink the world in a single draught (456-460), that they would gulp down this whole universe, set fire to the firmament and nail the wind down to one spot by an arrow. Forming gangs of armed warriors, they are growling and vaunting the valour of their elephant-army as deadlier than even the god of death. Their words are sharper than weapons, fiercer than fire and are so destructive that in comparison even the deadliest poison would taste sweet. But these warriors are like imaginary castles in the cloud-land, rolls of void or fruits painted on canvas. It is not a real army facing you, but it is like a mirage in floods, a snake made of rags or a show of decorated puppets (461-465).

33. *Stand up, therefore, and win renown; conquer your foes and enjoy a flourishing kingdom. They have already been killed by Me; be you merely the instrument, O ambidextrous (Arjuna).*

    I have already destroyed the power on which their physical act.ivit.ies are sustained. All these warriors are now lifeless like the clay figures in a potter's home. Just as when the string by which the puppets dance snaps, they fall down by the merest touch, so you will be able to shatter your enemy's army without loss of time. Therefore, O Arjuna, come to your senses and rise up. At the time of capture of Virata's cattle by the Trigartas, you benumbed the enemy's army by your magical missile and disrobed them at the hands of Uttara, faint-hearted son of Virata. That army has now become impotent and has come here ready for war. Destroy it now and earn eternal glory, so that people will say "Arjuna, single handed, has vanquished the army (466-470)." And this will not be a mere victory, but will bring with it the entire kingdom. O Arjuna, be a mere instrument in my hand.

34. *Slay Drona, Bhishma, Jayadratha, Karna and other worriers too, already killed by Me; do not grieve. Fight and you will trirmph over your foes in battle.*

    Do not be cowed down by Drona. or be frightened of Bhishma, and do not feel any scruples to take. up arms against Karna. Do not be perplexed as to how to get rid of Jayadratha. Know that all these and other famous warriors are little more than portraits of lions

drawn on a wall. which can be erased by a moist hand. O Arjuna, if you ask my opinion about this crowd which has come to fight, I say that they are noth1ng but phantoms. I have already swallowed them up. (471-475) Their brief span of life ended the moment you saw them enter my mouth. They are just like hollow rinds peeled off the plantain tree. Therefore, rise up now, kill them, already slain by me and do not fall into the grip of a non-existent agony. As one makes a scare-crow and fells it down by an arrow, I have acted in the same manner. You be a mere tool in my hands. O dear Arjuna, know that those who were hostile to you were rendered powerless even at the time of their birth. Therefore, win this victory and enjoy the kingdom. Let this be written in the annals of history that your cousins, who were by nature, proud, powerful and impudent, were slain by you without much trouble (476-480).

Sanjaya said:

35. *Upon hearing these words of Krishna, Arjuna, crowned with a diaden, with folding hands and trembling, bowed down and spoke to Krishna, with a stammer, prostrate and panic-stricken.*

Jnanadeva states, "Sanjaya narrated this tale to the king of Kurus, who was full of despondency with his desires unfulfilled. Lord Krishna was speaking in a sonorous voice which was like the sound of the torrential waters of the Ganges rushing down Satyaloka. Just as the torrential rain of the big clouds comes down with a resounding sound or the milky sea was reverberating when it was being churned, Lord Krishna, who was the fathomless source of the world of many forms was speaking in a rich voice. (481-485) That Arjuna heard a little, but it is not known whether it brought him solace or distress. His whole body was shaking. He was repeatedly bending and folding his hands and was touching the feet of shri Krishna with his head. As he struggled to speak, his voice was getting choked up; whether this was out of joy or distress, it is for you to decide. But from the words of the above verse, I could guess that this was the condition of Arjuna after he heard the speech of Lord Krishna. Then Arjuna bowed down before the feet of the Lord in trepidation and said: "Did you not say (486-490).

Arjuna said:

36. *It is meet, O Krishna that in your glory the world rejoices and dotes upon you. The terror-struck demons flee in all directions and the throngs of Siddhas do homage (to you).*

"O Arjuna, I am the Destroyer, whose divine play is destruction of all creatures?" I regard this utterance of yours as inevitable. But it does not seem right to me that as a Destroyer, you are going to swallow this world at the time of its continuance. How can one take away one's youth and replace it with untimely old age'? Therefore, what you wish, will probably not come to pass. O Lord, has the sun ever set at noon before the lapse of four praharas (twelve hours)? And, 0 God, even though you are unfailing, you have also to go through three phases, which are potent in their own times (491-495). When the origination of the world (utpatti) starts, then continuance and dissolution are held in abeyance. At the time of continuance (sthiti), origination and dissolution do not hold sway. And at the time of dissolution (laya), origination and continuance cease to act. This order has existed from eternity and is unalterable. Now this world is in the phase of continuance and is in the full bloom of life and enjoyment. Therefore, I do not see any prospect that you will bring about its dissolution at this juncture.

Then the Lord nodded his assent and said, "0 Partha, I have clearly demonstrated to you that the life of both the armies has come to an end. The rest of the world will meet its death in their appointed times". No sooner had the Lord said this than Arjuna saw that the world had become restored to its former state (496-500). Then he said, "0 Lord, you are the mover and stage-manager and it is owing to you that this world has resumed its former position. In this connection, I recall your fame that you deliver the mortals plunged in the ocean of reinsure. Recollecting it again and again. I am enjoying that state of supreme bliss and rolling on the waves of that ever-lasting joy. O God, this world that has received a fresh lease of life is enamoured of you, and you are wiping out the evildoers out by you. The demons in the three worlds are fleeing away in all directions in dread of you [501-505). On the other hand, the gods, mortals, Siddhas, Yakshas, in short, all beings, whether moving or stationary, are doing obeisance to you.

37. *And why should they not bow down to you, O Supreme Self, the First Cause, even greater than god Brahma? O Infinite Lord of gods, the abode of the world You are the Imperishable, being and non-being and is beyond both.*

O Lord Narayana, I need not ask why these demons are fleeing away from you, without taking refuge in you. I know it all; O Lord, how can darkness subsist after sunrise'? You are the fount of all light and in your radiant light all these demons are swept away like straw. O Shri Rama, the supreme glory of yours which was beyond our ken so far, has been revealed by you (506-510). Your will has

given birth to this Maya, which has spread many rows of the creations and the creepers in the form of creatures all over the world. O God, you are the Supreme Essence, limitless and eternal. You are endless, endowed with unlimited attributes. You are impartial to all and are the God of gods. You are the support of the universe and are Imperishable. You are the manifest and the manifest and that which is also beyond that.

38. *You are the first among gods, the Primeval Person; You are the final refuge of this universe. You are the knower, the knowable, the final abode; all this is strung in you, O Lord of infinite form.*

You are the source of both prakriti and purusha and also beyond both. You are the enternal Spirit and there is no one prior to you. You are the very spring and support of life and you alone possess the knowledge of the past and the future (511-515). O God, you are the treasure from which the Vedas derive happiness, and you are the support of Maya, which upholds all the three worlds. You are the final abode in which the Maya becomes merged in your being at the end of dissolution. In short, this expanded universe owes its existence to you. How can anyone describe the glory of yours, who has unlimited forms'?

39. *You ore Wind, Fire, Moon, Yama and Varuna; You are the Lord of creatures, the great grand sire of all Hail to you, a thousand times all hail. Hail unto you and over again all hail.*
40. *I salute you in front and from behind; I salute you on every side, 0 All. Of infinite vigour and of immeasurable might, you encompass all and so are All.*

O God, is there anything in which you do not abide'? Is there any spot in which you do not dwell'? Enough of this description! My salutations to you wherever you are. O Infinite Lord, you are the Wind, Yama, the god of death, who chastises all and the abdominal Are in all creatures (526-520). You are Varuna, the Moon, god Brahma who creates the world and the primal progenitor of Brahma. O Lord of the universe, all things that exist in this world are your manifestations, whether they have form or not. My salutat1ons to them.

In this way, Arjuna did obeisance to the Lord with his heart full of love and said again, "My salutations to you, O Lord, my salutations to you" Then he beheld the Lord closely and said again, "My salutations to you, 0 Lord, my salutations to you". Then he saw every limb of that form with great satisfaction and repeated, "My salutation to you O Lord, my salutation to you." (521-525). He saw

the moving and stationary things in that entire form and said again," My salutations to you, 0 Lord, my salutations to you." In this manner, un11mited and marvelous forms were revealed to Arjuna. In wonderment, he said again and again, "My salutations to you, O Lord, my salutations to you". He could not also recollect a better form of panegyric than this and could not also keep quiet. He uttered such resonant eulogies in a state of devotional love. Thus he gave a thousand bows to the Lord and said, "I bow down to you, as you stand facing me. It is useless to ask whether you have a front and a rear. But 0 Lord, I bow down to you, who are standing in the rear (526-530). As you stood behind me, I spoke of your rear, but in your universal form which pervades the world, you cannot possibly have a front or a rear. I do not know how to describe your different limbs, but you abide in all 1n the form of self. My salutations to you. O God, you are the store of boundless strength, possessed of incalculable might and ever the same to all. My salutations to you. You remain pervading all, as the sky fills up empty space. You abide everywhere, as the waves sweeping over the milky ocean consist of nothing but milk (531-535). I have now realised that you are not different from this universe, but that you are all this universe.

41. *Regarding You as a friend, I recklessly accosted You as '0 Krishna,' '0 Yadava,' O friend, not knowing this greatness of Yours, out of indifference or love.*

    O Lord, not knowing your real nature, I behaved with you, as if you were my. Kinsman. Alas. this was an improper act on my part. I used nectar to cleanse the floor, exchanged the wish-yielding cow for a colt and cut the philosophers' stone which I had come across for foundation work. I cut the w1sh-yellding tree to prepare a hedge for my farm, and when I had chanced upon a mine of philosophers' stones, I utilized these stones to drive away vagrant cattle. I used to take undue advantage of my intlmacy with you. (536-540) as on this present occasion. What is this warfare! How paltry! But I have prevailed upon you, the Supreme Brahman, to become my charioteer. O liberal Lord, we sent you to the Kauravas as our envoy to negotiate terms of peace with them. Although you are a mighty God, we have as it were, bartered you to make paltry gains. The fool that I am, I did not recognise you to be the object of the rapturous samadhi of the yogis and used to tick you off.

42. *And if I have slighted you in fun, while at play or in be4 sitting or at meals, either alone, O Krishna, or before others, I ask for your forgiveness, O immeasurable One.*

You are the Primal Being of this universe. But when you were giving an audience, we used to talk to you jestingly as to an ordinary relation. When we sometimes visited you, we expected to be treated on equal terms with you and we used to take offence, if you were remiss (541-545). On such occasions we were obstinate enough to bring you to your knees and coax us. In the arrogance of my wisdom, I have often turned my back on you. Was it proper for us to do all this? This was a gross blunder on our part. O God, when we played balancing the pole or wrestling or games of dice, we used to quarrel vehemently and reproach you. We used to claim unblushingly the best things for ourselves and even dared to counsel you, though you are omniscient. We used to defy you by asking you, "What do we owe to you?' This offence of ours is so grievous that even the universe will not contain it. But I swear that all this took place because of my ignorance of your divinity (546-550).

If you remembered me at mealtime and wished affectionately that I should share the meal with you. I used to sit sullen out of empty pride. I used to play in your inner chamber without scruples and used to share your bed without any qualms. I used to regard you only as a member of the Yadava clan and used to swear at you when you wanted to leave. I used to share with you the same seat or turned a deaf ear to what you said. All this was the result of our close intimacy, O Infinite Lord, How many of them shall I tell you? I am guilty of such trespasses (551-555) O Lord forgive, with motherly love, these indiscretions, whether done in your presence or behind your back. Sometimes when the river goes to join the sea with muddy waters, the sea cannot but accept it. In the same way overlook, whatever rude words I said to you through love or indiscretion. It is because of your forgiving nature; this earth has become forbearing and is able to bear the burden of all creatures. Whatever submissions I make in this regard will not be sufficient. Therefore, O Immeasurable Lord, I have taken refuge at your feet and so overlook all my misdemeanors (556-560).

43. *You are the father of the world, moving or non-moving; You are the venerable teacher, worthier than others. There is none equal to You; how can there be anyone better in all the three worlds, O Lord of matchless might?*

O Lord Krishna. now I realise your true glory. It is this that you are the origin of this universe and are the God Supreme over all other gods. You are the primal preceptor, who taught even the Vedas. O Shri Rammer, you are profound and inscrutable and same to all living creatures. You are incomparable in all your perfect attributes

and you are second to none. Need I say that there is no one equal to you? This whole universe is contained in the vault of heaven. So it would be impertinent for me to say that somebody is equal to you. How cans one talk about any being higher than you? (561-565) Therefore, you abide in this universe singly and there is no one equal or superior to you. This is your extraordinary glory, which beggars description.

44. *Therefore, bowing low and prostrating the body, I beseech you, the adorable lord. As father with son, as friend with friend, as lover with the loved one, O lord, pray bear with me.*

Saying this Arjuna prostrated his body before the lord, at that time his mind was filled with eight pious (*sattvika)* emotions. He said, "O God, be gracious and deliver me from this sea of my misdeeds. Although you are the friend and benefactor of the whole world, I deemed you to be a kinsman and paid scant regard to you. I flaunted my wealth before you, who are the God of gods. Although you were worthy of praise, you used to speak highly of me publicly before an assembly of men. At that time I used to become puffed up and brag (566-570). O Lord, I have been guilty of such numerous lasses. So have mercy and bear with me for my mistakes. How unworthy I am even to beseech you like this but like a father who forgives the lapses of his son without feeling joy or sorrow, so please condone all my misdeeds. Just as a friend suffers silently the impudence of a friend, so bear with me. Although one does not expect formalities from a close friend, still we made you wash out dinner plates. Pardon me for all such indignities heaped upon you (571-575). Just as when one meets his bosom friend, he does not hesitate to disclose his mind to him or a faithful wife solely devoted to her husband in body and soul, cannot but open her heart to him, when she meets him, so I have implored you. There is one more thing, which I feel like asking you.

45. *Though glad I am to see what has not been seen before. My mind is distraught with fear. Show me, O God, that other form. Be merciful, o lord of gods, abode of the worlds.*

As an intimate friend I pressed you hard to reveal to me your cosmic form. You fulfilled my prayer with the affection of a parent. You indulged me with motherly love, as if you had planted the with-yielding tree in my courtyard or given me the colt of the wish – yielding cow to play with (576-580) or presented me the stars or the moon to play the game of dice or ball. How hard it is to acquire even one drop of nectar! But you have indeed drenched me in ambrosial showers for four months and by preparing beds have

sown philosophers' stones. Because of these many indulgences of yours, I have attained fulfillment and seen with my own eyes your not even heard of this form, and so how could they have a vision of it? You have laid bare before me, to my great joy, your inner essence, of which even the Upanishads did not get a glimpse. If I take stock of all my birth since the beginning of the epoch until now (581-585), I do not remember to have heard or seen this form. Reason even cannot reach its outskirts; how then can it delve into its inner essence? Then why talk of human eyes gazing on it? Verily none has set his eyes on it, none has even heard of it. But you revealed to me that form and filled my mind with ecstatic joy. But now I long to gossip with you, to enjoy your friendsh1p and embrace you (586-590). But if I wish to do all this with your cosmic form, which of these countless faces shall I talk to, and how can I clasp in my arms your boundless form'? It is not possible to race with the w1nd or hold the sky in one's arms. Likewise how can one carry on water-sport in the sea'? O God, this form fills me with dread. Please grant me this prayer and wind up your universal form. As a pilgrim, after traversing the earth with joy, returns home to enjoy a settled life, so your four-armed figure is a haven of rest for us. All yogic practices lead to this figure and scr1ptural study also culminates in it. (591-595) And all sacrificial acts, pilgrimages and acts of char1ty and merit come to fructification in this divine figure. I am truly fond of this divine figure and am impatiently waiting to have a sight of it. Pray help me out of this difficulty. O you, venerable God of gods, who knows the secrets in others' minds and who has founded this universe, pray grant me your grace and vouchsafe to me a vision of this divine figure.

46. *I long to see you as before, with your diadem, mace and discus in hand. Please resume that four-armed form, 0 thousand-armed one, of universal form.*

The blue luster of that four-armed figure has bestowed colour to the blue lotus and the azure sky and lent its splendour to the sapphire (596-600). It is as though emerald 1s exuding fragrance, or rapturous joy has sprouted arms and the cup1d himself by playing in the lap of the Lord became a sight for sore eyes. The crown which adorns the head of the Lord looks more splendid because of your handsome head; truly the luster of your body adds splendor to the ornaments with which it is decked. Shri Hari, who 1s wearing the Vaijayanti necklace round his neck, looks handsome like a cloud in the midst of a rainbow. The mace in your hand makes a gift of salvation to the demons and softly lustrous 1s the discus held by you in the other hand. I have become impatient to behold that figure and would implore you to resume it (60l-605). My eyes are now

satiated after feeding upon the feast of your cosmic form and are now long1ng to see your darkish figure I like no other form better than this form of yours with attributes. Even the vision of your universal form looks less attractive to me than the sight of your human form. This handsome figure alone gives both sensual pleasure as well as salvation, which no other form does. Therefore, O Lord, w1nd up this universal form and resume your form with attributes.

The blessed Lord said:

47. *By way of grace, O Arjuna, I have revealed to you, through my power of Yoga, the Supreme cosmic form"which is effulgent, infinite and primeval, and mhic4 none else has seen before.*

At these words of Arjuna, the Lord was amazed and said. "I have never met a thoughtless person like you. You have witnessed a rare vision of unsurpassed grandeur; but you do not seem to exult in it. Instead you do not know that you are talking like an imprudent person out of fright (606-610). When I am propitious to a devotee, I bestow upon him only external gifts. But if I do not come across a truly devoted soul,' to whom can I divulge the secret of my heart? But for your "sake, I have wrought this universal form by bringing together all things in this world. I do not know how enchanted I am by your devotional love, as a result of which I have unfolded before the world the colours of My most mysterious form. This form of mine, which is beyond the reach of Maya, is limitless and from it have emanated Krishna and other incarnations. This form consists of the splendour of knowledge and is all-pervasive. It has no end and it is the firm foundation of the universe (611-615). No one except yourself has set his eyes on it or even heard about it, because it cannot be attained by any external means.

48. *Not by the study of the Vedas and sacrifices, nor by charity, nor by rituals, nor by mere austerities, could I be beheld in this form in the human world, by any but you, O great hero of the Kurus.*

When the Vedas sighted this form, they were struck dumb. Those who worshipped with sacrificial rites went up to heaven and returned (after their merit was exhausted). Those who took up yogic practices left them as too arduous, and those who studied the scriptures did not develop a liking for this form. Those who followed the path of pious works rushed forward eagerly for its attainment, but could only reach the precincts of Satyaloka. The ascetics readily gave up their rigorous austerities, as soon as they caught a glimpse of the grandeur of the cosmic form. Thus this form

remained beyond the reach of austerit1es also (616-620). Just as you saw 1t without any effort on your part, it has not come within the ken of any mortal. You are the one person who 1s worthy to posses this treasure of mystic vision, which is denied even to god Brahma.

49. *Do not fear or become bewildered by the sight of this awesome form of Mine. Shedding fear, with a cheerful heart, behold again that humoon form of Mine.*

Therefore, consider yourself as blessed by the vision of this cosmic form and cast off all fear. Do not churlish as better any form other than this. If anyone chances upon a sea of nectar all of a sudden, would he leave it for fear of being drowned in it'? Has anyone abandoned a mountain of gold on the ground that he cannot carry the load'? (621-625) If anyone has come across a wish-fulfilling stone by good luck, does he throw it away because of its weight'? Will anyone drive away the wish-yielding cow on the ground that he cannot feed her? If the moon were to visit somebody's house, will he turn her away complaining of her scorching heat'? Will anyone reprove the sun for casting a shadow and ask him to move away'? Why should you feel disturbed when my cosmic form, with all its majestic grandeur, has come within your reach'? 0 Arjuna, you are a bumpkin, who knows nothing. What can one say about you'? 0 Arjuna you are clasping a shadow instead of the substance. This four-armed figure is not my true Self. It is not proper that you should cling to it with a restless mind (626-630). Even now, it is not too late to give up your penchant for this four-armed figure and concentrate on my cosmic form. Even if this universal form is dreadful and vast, pin your faith in it. Just as a miser moves outwardly in the world, keeping his mind on his treasure all the time or a mother bird soars in the sky leaving her heart with its fledgelings in the nest or the cow grazes in the mountain with its mind on its calf tethered in the cowpen, so keep your m1nd Axed on the universal form (631-635) and meditate upon my four-armed figure for your mental satisfaction. But please do not forget what I have been telling you again and aga1n and divert your mind from my divine form. As you had never seen this divine form before, you feel this terrible fright at its sight. Get rid of this fright and let your mind flow with pass1onate love for this divine form. Lord Krishna, who had assumed the universal form said. O Arjuna, now see my former four-armed figure and be happy."

Sanjaya said:

50. Vasudeva (Krishna) having spoken thus, revealed again his previous human) form. And seeing Partha terribly frightened, he reassured him by resuming his gentle figure

After saying this, the Lord resumed his human form. (Jnanadeva says,) there is nothing in this to wonder at, because Arjuna was food of that form, (636-640). Lord Krishna, who was the Supreme Self incarnate, had vouchsafed his essential being like his cosmic form to Arjuna, but it did not catch his fancy. This was just like discarding a thing after demanding it, or finding fault with a jewel or turning down a match on the ground that the girl did not attract one. So unbounded was Lord Krishna's love for Arjuna that he lavished upon him his choicest gift, namely the cosmic form. Just as one fashion an ornament out of a gold bar and not liking it melts it, so the Lord assumed his cosmic form out of deep love for Arjuna and finding that Arjuna did not like it, resumed his human form. (641-645) Where can one And a spiritual Master who bears with his disciple and caters to his ardent des1re'P One cannot fathom this deep love of Lord Krishna for Arjuna.

He then withdrew his divine luster, which had flooded the world and condensed it in the human form. Just as all living creatures are merged in the Absolute, or the entire tree is stored in the seed or the dream vanishes in the waking state, so Lord Krishna compressed his cosmic form in his incarnated form. It was as though the sun's effulgence was absorbed in the sun's d1sc or the cloud was merged 1n the sky or as the tide subsided into the sea (646-650). The Lord, who had folded his cosmic form in the figure of Krishna, unfolded it in order to please Arjuna. But when Arjuna, the customer, did not approve of the colour and texture and the length and breadth of the cloth unrolled before h1m, he folded it again. Then the cosmic form which had enveloped the world by its vastness and grandeur appeared as a gentle and handsome human figure. In short, the Infinite took a finite form in order to reassure panic-stricken Arjuna. Arjuna was dazed like one who suddenly awoke from a dream of his visit to heaven (651-655). Just as, with the Guru's grace, all worldly knowledge vanishes, giving place to the experience of Brahman, such was the state of Arjuna when he beheld the human form of the Lord. At that time his heart rejoiced that the curtain of the cosmic form was drawn back to reveal his human form. At the sight of this form Arjuna felt immense relief, as if he had scored a victory over death or had escaped unscathed from a hurricane, or had swam across the seven seas, paddling with h1s arms. Then he saw the earth peopled with its inhabitants like the stars, which slowly come into view after - sunset (656-660). When he cast h1s eyes around, he saw the same

Kurukshetra where the same kinsmen arrayed in both the armies were hurling weapons at one another. He also saw his chariot, standing at the same place under the canopy of the arrows hurled by them, Lord Krishna seated in front and himself standing down the chariot.

Arjuna said:

51. *Seeing again this gentle form of yours, O oppressor of foes, I have now come to my senses and restored to my normal state.*

In this way, the heroic Arjuna saw the human form of the Lord he had prayed for and said to himself, "I have now regained my lost courage. My knowledge had parted from my intellect and had strayed into wilderness. My mind had absconded alongwith my ego, a11 the senses had stopped their functions, my speech was struck dumb and my body had got into a wreched state (661-665). Now all these have come into their own and have resumed their work. The sight of th1s incarnated form of the Lord has revived them." Then in a transport of joy he said to Lord Krishna, "0 God of gods, I have feasted my eyes on your human form. You have put heart into me by revealing this form to me like a mother who reassures her child who had strayed way, by feeding it at the breast. I was treading the water briskly in the sea of the cosmic form and reached the shore of your four-armed image. O friend, dwelling in Dvaraka, you have not only given me the vision of this form, but have watered my Soul which was drying up like a tree (666-670). O Lord, I; thirsting for the sight of your human form, have now come upon this ocean of nectar and I am reassured that I shall breathe freely now. The creeper in the form of an ecstatic joy 1s now planted in the bed of my heart and I am enjoying to my heart's content 1ts fruit of bliss.

The blessed Lord said:

52. *Very difficult it is to see this (universal) form of Mine, as you have seen. Of this form even the gods ever long to have a glimpse.*

Hearing this, Lord Krishna said, What foolishness is this'? Have you forgotten so soon my instruction'? I told you to pin your love in the cosmic form and then come to meet My four-armed figure physically. O, undiscerning Arjuna, you had come across the golden mountain of Meru, but you misconceived it to be of no account and spurned it (671-675). Lord Shiva did not get even a glimpse of my cosmic form even after performing rigorous penance. O Arjuna, even the yogis, who mortify their flesh by the practice of eight-fold Yoga, do not get a chance to gaze at this form. The gods

spend their whole life-time in anxiety as to how to get a glimpse of this form. Just as the chataka bird scans the horizon greedily for the cloud, so gods eagerly remain speculating all the time whether they will get a vision of this cosmic form (676-680). But this great vision, which they could not see even in a dream, came within your easy reach.

53. *Not by the Vedas nor by austerities, nor by charity nor by sacrifice, can I be seen in this form, as you have beheld me.*

    But, O Arjuna, there are no pathways which can lead you to this vision. It is for this reason that the Vedas, along with the six shastras, backed away from it in despair. O great archer, even many rigorous penances cannot get a chance to come in the presence of it. No one can get even a glimpse of it through charitable gifts or sacrificial rites. Keep in mind that there is only one way to gain this vision. A mind absorbed in devotional love alone leads to it unfailingly (681-685).

54. *Only through exclusive devotion, can I be known in this form, 0 Arjuna, and seen truly and entered into, O scorcher of the foes.*

    The nature of this devotion is 1ike this. Just as the showers dropped from a cloud cann6t but reach the earth, or as the river Ganges, along with all streams, goes in search of the sea and eventually joins it, so he who loves me with exclusive and unflinching devotion attains to me and becomes one with me. Like the milky sea which is equally sweet at the shores as also in the middle, I am the same to all. When he has no other object of worship other than my divine essence which he sees in all created beings right from the ant (686-690), at that moment he will fully comprehend my cosmic form and get a true vision of me. Just as when firewood is ignited it is consumed by Are and becomes Are without leaving even a trace of its name or the sky remains in the dark until sunrise, but becomes lit up everywhere after sunrise, so with the vision of My divine form, ego1sm is destroyed and alongwith it the notion of duality also van1shes. At that moment, he comes to know that he and the universe are essentially nothing but My divine Self. In short, he 1s un1ted to Me and becomes one with Me (691-695).

55. *He who works for Me with Me as his Supreme goat, who is devoted to Me and detached and is without hatred towards any creature, he comes unto Me, 0 son of Pandu (Arjuna).*

Such a devotee performs all his works for me and dedicates them to me. He holds nothing in this world more dear to him than myself and regards me as the goal of his life. He sees me in all beings, forgetful of them- very names, and free from any ill-will towards them, worships me 1n them. When such a devotee departs from his body, he merges into my be1ng and becomes my very Self.

Sanjaya said, "Thus spoke Lord Krishna who has become big-bellied with the incorporation of the world in it. The Lord uttered these words filled with pathos (656-700). Then Arjuna, full of ecstatic joy and skilful in the art of devotion, began to scan both the forms of the Lord. But he preferred h1s human form as more beneficial than the universal form, but the Lord did not attach much importance to this v1ew. He tried to demonstrate with one or two ingenious arguments that his human form, being confined to a body is not truer than his all-pervading form. Then Arjuna said to himself, "I must ask him wh1ch of these two forms is better" (701-705). Reflecting thus, Arjuna will proceed to question the Lord in a befitting manner. Jnandeva says, I shall narrate that tale in simple ovi verses in a pleasing manner; listen carefully and enjoy it. Full of piety and faith I shall fi11 my joined palms with loose flowers in the form of verses and offer them at the feet of the divine form (706-708).

Chapter Twelfth

(O grace of My Master), you are known to be pure and generous and ever ready to give joy to your disciple. Glory to you. The fainting fit, which results from the bite of a snake in the form of sense-objects, does not abate without your help. If the waves of your kindness come in floods, which will suffer from the pangs of misery or worldly sorrow? O mother, it is through you that the disciple enjoys the bliss resulting from yoga, and his strong desire to become one with the Absolute is also satisfied by you. You keep him on the lap of the Serpent-Power of the *Muladhara* and placing him in the cradle of the region of the heart, you swing the cradle (1-5). You wave the light of self-knowledge before him. Provide him with toys of self-restraint and breath-control and adorn him with child's bliss. You give him nectar to drink from the seventeenth phase of the moon and singing a lullaby of the unstuck sound (*Anahata*), you lull him to sleep after acquainting him with the bliss flowing from *samadhi* You are the mother of the seekers, and all *lores* spring from your feet. Therefore, I shall never leave your cool shelter. O grace of my master, one to whom you show mercy becomes the founder of all *lores*. Therefore, O magnanimous mothers, who are the wish yielding tree to your devotees, give me leave to unfold this literary work (6-10). Oh mother; pray help me to create oceans of the nine sentiments, mines of figures of speech and cliffs of imports of the Gita. Let me open up in the land of the mother-tongue mines of gold and cultivate rows of creepers in the form of thoughts. Let there is laid out always-dense orchards of topics of knowledge laden with the fruits of discussions. Let the dens of atheists and the crooked ways of wranglers be destroyed and the beasts of prey in the form of evil thinkers be driven away. Endow me with the capacity to sing the praise of Lord Krishna and secure for the hearers the kingdom of bliss by hearing it (11-15). Let there is abundance of divine. Knowledge in the city of Marathi language and let the world have dealings only in the bliss of knowledge. O mother, if you will take me under the wing of your love, I will launch this literary work, Hearing this entreaty of the disciple, the Guru gave him a gracious glance and said, "Now start your discourse on the Gita without any further talk". Jnanadeva said, "Very well, this is indeed a great favour from you. I am highly pleased and shall continue the discourse. Please lend me your ears."

Arjuna said:

1. *The devotees who, absorbed in you, worship you in this manner, and those who (meditate) on the Imperishable of them who are more versed in yoga?*

   Then the heroic son of Pandu (Arjuna), the very banner of victory of the Kuru race, said (16-20), O Lord, have you heard what I said? I was frightened of your marvellous cosmic vision. I took refuge in your human form, as I was accustomed to it. But you warned me that I should not do so. Undoubtedly you exist both in the unmanifest and the unmanifest form, the former being attainable through devotion and the latter through the practice of yoga. These are the two pathways, which lead one to the threshold of the manifest and unmanifest forms. But the purity of a bar of gold weighing hundred tolas also belongs to a piece of that bar weighing three gunjas (a red berry forming the smallest weight of a jeweller). Therefore, the worth of the limited manifest form and the all-pervading unmanifest form is the same (21-25). The power, which subsists in the ocean of nectar (to grant immortality), exists in a sip of nectar. My mind has already reached this definite conclusion. But I wish to know whether the universal form assumed by you for a moment is your true nature or is only your divine play. You have devotees who perform all actions for your sake, hold you to be the highest object of worship and surrender all their desires to you. Then there are some that worship you by cherishing your unmanifest form in their mind (26-30) which is indescribable and beyond the Omkara, which is imperishable and not like anything else. They meditate upon this form, which is super-sensuous, imperceptible and not limited by time and space, with the conviction that 'we are that Brahman'. Tell me who between the two have apprehended the essential nature of yoga. Overjoyed at thetas query from Arjuna, the blessed Lord, the friend of all said "O Arjuna, you know well how to ask a question."

   The blessed Lord said:

2. *Those I deem the best yogis, mho imbued with supreme faith, fix their minds on me and worship me with constant contemplation.*

   O Partha, just when the sun goes behind the western horizon, all his rays follow him (31-35), or a river begins to swell in the rainy season, so the faith (of my devotees) goes on increasing as they continue to worship me. Their devotion increases like the tidal flow of the river Ganges, which flows in its full force all through before it joins the sea. These devotees fixing their minds on me, worship me day and night and dedicate their whole life to me. I consider such devotees as the best knowers of yoga.

3. *But those who worship my unmanifest form, which is all-persuading, beyond comprehension, unchanging, immovable, eternal, and the ineffable Supreme Self,*

4. *And mho controlling all their senses, and treating everyone alike, remain devoted to the good of all beings, they reach me too.*

   O Arjuna, the jnanis try to realise the imperishable Brahman without form (36-40). How can the senses penetrate that in which the mental activity comes to a stop and which even reason cannot enter? Since this Brahman is not to be found at one place, it is inaccessible even to profound meditation. Since it is without form and exists in all forms at all places, the mind finds it difficult to contemplate upon it and becomes non-pulsed. It was never born nor will it ever take birth. One cannot say whether it exists or does not exist; so no means can be found to attain it. It neither moves nor stirs, it neither ends nor gets soiled. The jnanis have brought this Brahman under their control through their yogic power (41-45). They have consigned legions of sense-objects to the Are of dispass1on and have brought with great fortitude their parched senses under control. Then they withdraw the senses (from the external objects), holding them in leash through self-control and confine them in the cave of the heart. After closing the exit of the out-breath, they erect the tower of mulabandha after adopting a proper posture and mudra. They snap the bonds of hope, blast the cliffs of fears and completely dispel the darkness of ignorance. Burning the seven fluids (*dhatu*) of the body by the flames of the Mulabandha posture, they offer in sacrifice all the diseases in the body to the six plexuses (*chakras*) (46-50). Then erecting the torch of the Serpent-Power on the Muladhara they make way for it in the spinal column right up to the head. Then closing the nine gates (of the senses) by means of crossbars in the form of self-restraint, they open up the way in the Sushumna nadi. They kill rams in the form of desires and buffaloes in the form of their minds and offer their heads as oblations to the goddess Durga in the form of the power of the vital breath. After combining the breath passages Ida and Pingala, they speedily win the nectar in the seventeenth phase of the moon in the loud acclamation of the unbeaten (*anahata*) sound. Then they ascend the flight of steps carved out in the passage of the Sushumna nadi and reach the brahmarandhra, the aperture in the head (51-55). After mounting the difficult stairs of the ajnacakra and clasping in their arms the sky-region of the head, they become united to the Supreme Brahman. In this way they, imbued with equanimity of the mind, resort to the strenuous path of yoga in order to attain Brahman. Those that have attained in this manner the unmanifest Brahman in exchange of their individual life, also come to me. Do not think that they gain something more on the strength of this yoga; if any thing it is toil, which falls into their lap.

5. The toil is greater for those whose minds are set on the Unmanifest; for the goal, which is not manifest, is hard to attain by embodied persons.

   There are others who wish to attain without devotion the supportless unmanifest Brahman, which does well to all living beings. But they

succumb to the temptations such as lordship of heaven and desire of prosperity and supernatural powers, which come in their way. They have to face many hurdles such as desire and wrath. Then will they not feel that they have toiled in vain? They have to suppress hunger and thirst and they have to keep the wind stirring with both hands. They have to sleep in the sun during daytime, to derive pleasure from self-restraint and to form friendship with trees. They have to expose their bodies to heat and cold and live in the rain (61-65). Thus this yoga is like entering the funeral pyre by a faithful wife everyday without having a husband. They have to carry on a continuous struggle with death without any purpose such as serving a master or following a family custom. Can anyone take a drought of poison, which is hot and pungent'? O Partha, will not his mouth get torn in swallowing a hill? Therefore, those who resort to yoga are destined to share only misery in life. Just consider, if a toothless person were compelled to eat gram of steel, will that satisfy his hunger or put him death (66-70)? Has anyone swum across the sea with the help of his arms, or has anyone ever been able to walk in the sky? Has anyone been able to ascend the steps of sun's abode without receiving a single wound on the battlefield? Therefore, O Arjuna, just as a cripple cannot enter into contest with the wind, so it is difficult for an embodied person to attain the formless God. Those who, with this intense longing to attain Brahman, work hard for it, have necessarily to suffer great afflictions. But those who resort to the path of devotion do not have to endure such misery (71-75).

6. *But as for those who surrender all actions to Me, being solely devoted to Me, and who meditate upon Me with exclusive yoga (of devotion),*

   Such devotees perform willingly, with their organs of actions, all the works falling to their lot according to their caste and stage of life. In performing such works, they follow the scriptural injunctions, shun prohibited actions and burn all actions by dedicating the fruits of actions to me. In this way, by surrendering all their works to me, they annihilate their actions. And whatever natural tendencies they possess, whether of the body, speech or mind, are not directed anywhere except to me. In this way they worship me without interruption and become my dwelling-place through meditation (76-80). Leaving their poor and helpless clients namely sensuous pleasures and salvation; they enjoy having dealings with me. In this way, they surrender to me their body, mind and soul through exclusive devotion and love. How can I tell you what I do for them'? I do whatever they wish for.

7. *lift them up from the ocean of the cycle of deaths speedily, O son of Kunti (Arjuna), their minds being fixed on Me.*

   What more can I say'? O Arjuna, how dear is the child to its mother? So my devotees of whatever kind are dear to me. I have undertaken the work

of relieving them of their miseries in this Kali age. Why should my devotees feel anxious about the cycle of births and deaths? Will a rich man's wife ever have to face the situation of having to eat uncooked food'? (81-85) these devotees are like my pals. So if they have to face any adverse times, is it not a blot on my honour? I feel distressed at seeing this created world engulfed in the waves of the ocean of mortal life. Who is not frightened of the turbulent sea of life? Therefore to save them from this fright, I hasten to their places from time to time by assuming different incarnations. I have delivered them out of this sea of life by constructing boats in the form of thousand names (vtz. Vishnu Sahasranama) (86-90). For those who are single and unencumbered, I settle them in meditation; for those who are fond of domestic life, I provide for them' boats in the form of my names. I provide life belts of my love to some devotees and take them to the other shore of salvation. For those who call themselves my devotees-be they quadrupeds, I make them At for the throne of Vaikuntha. Therefore, there is no cause of anxiety for my devotees. I am their saviour, ever ready to protect them. When my devotees dedicate all their mental functions to me, at that very moment they have made me predisposed towards them (91-95). Therefore, O winner of wealth, I give you this mantra that you should take to the path of devotion.

8. *Fix your mind on me alone, in me repose your intellect; then you shall dwell in me alone hereafter without any doubt.*

   O Arjuna, you fix your mind and intellect in me with determination. You will attain to me if you combine these two and enter my heart. Once your mind and intellect dwell in me, then how can the notion of duality exist between us? Just as light ceases when the lamp is put out, or the daylight vanishes when the sun sets, (96-100), so when the life-breath leaves the body, the ego automatically goes out with the mind and the body. Therefore fix your mind and intellect on my essential nature and then you will become all pervasive and one with me. This I declare to you on oath that this is the truth, without exception.

9. *If you cannot concentrate your mind finally on me, then seek to reach Me, O winner of wealth, by repeated yoga.*

   Or if you are not able to devote your mind, heart and intellect in their entirety to me, then dedicate your mind to me for a moment everyday (101-105). The moment you experience the joy of communion with me, that very moment you will become averse to sensual pleasures. Then as the water in the river dries up with the advent of winter, so your mind will become free from the bonds of worldly existence. Just as the moon wanes day by day from the full moon night to the new moon night and then disappears, so you will become free from the sensuous enjoyments and slowly enter my being and ultimately become one with me. Know that this

is what is called the yoga of practice. There is nothing, which cannot be attained with its help (106-110). Among those who practice this yoga, some roam in the sky, some tame fierce beasts such as tigers and snakes and some digest poison, while some walk on the sea. Through this practice some have made even the Vedas look insignificant. Therefore, there is nothing, which is difficult to secure by this yogic practice. Therefore, try to attain to me through the practice of yoga.

10. *If you are not capable of this repeated yoga, then be intent on working for me; performing actions for Mg sake alone, you mill attain to perfection.*

    If you do not possess the capacity to take up this yoga of practice, then keep your life-style as it is. Do not restrain the senses, do not scale down your sensual enjoyment and do not give up the pride of your caste (111-115). Follow your family customs, observe the rules laid down by the scriptures and shun actions prohibited by them. Then you are free in follow your own course of action. But whatever work you do by means of the body, speech and mind, do not say, "I am doing this." The Supreme Being under whose authority all the worldly affairs are carried on, knows what is action and what is non-action. If a work is not completed, then do not brood over it but adopt the style of life, which conforms to your caste. Just as water follows the course as devised by the gardener, you also perform your action, renouncing egoistic feeling (116-120). Then your intellect does not have to bear the burden of deciding what one ought to do or avoid doing so that the heart remains Axed on me without interruption. O Arjuna, does the carriage ever bother about whether the road is straight or crooked'? Therefore, whatever work you do, whether it is perfunctory or perfect, dedicate it to me quietly. In this manner, O Arjuna, if you perform actions with devotion, you will attain the highest form of liberation, namely identification with me.

11. *If you are incapable of resorting to disinterested action for my sake also, then relinquish the fruit of all actions, being self-restrained.*

    O Partha, should you not be able to perform actions for my sake, then think along these lines (121-125). If you think it difficult to dedicate your action to me before you resolve to do it or after, before you undertake it or later, then leave it alone. Even if I have pressed you to perform actions for my sake and dedicate them to me, you need not do so. Restrain your intellect and whenever you undertake any actions, abandon all thought about their fruit. Just as the trees and creepers drop down their fruits, you should also relinquish the fruits of the actions performed by you. You need not resolve to undertake such actions and perform them for my sake, but let them go into the Void (126-130). Like the rain fallen on a rock, a seed sown in fire or a dream seen in sleep, let all such actions be fruitless. O Partha, Just as a father does not entertain lewd desire for his daughter, be

you desireless for the fruits of your actions. Let your actions become void, as the flames go waste in the sky. O Arjuna, renunciation of fruit may appear to you as an easy path. yet it is the foremost among the yogas. Just as a bamboo tree becomes barren once it yields fruit, so the actions do not sprout on the relinquishment of their fruit. (131-135) Then even in the present life, physical activities come to a stop and there is an end to the cycle of births and deaths, O Arjuna, one attains knowledge through study and meditation becomes possible with the attainment of knowledge. Then the different mental states become merged in meditation, after which all actions stop of their own accord. With the stoppage of activity, renunciation of fruit automatically comes resulting in peace of mind. This is the only course open, O Partha, to attain serenity of mind; therefore you should undertake scriptural study first {136-140).

12. *Better indeed is knowledge than scriptural study; better than knowledge is meditation; better than meditation is renunciation of the fruit of action; from renunciation results instantaneous peace.*

    O Partha, knowledge is more profound than scriptural study and meditation is still more incomprehensible than knowledge. Renunciation of fruit of actions is superior to meditation, while the peace of mind, which comes after it, is matchless. O heroic Partha, by following this path my devotee attains peace through these stages.

13. *He who is non-hostile, friendly and compassionate to any creature, free from possessiveness and pride, forgiving and equable in sorrow and happiness,*

    As the all-pervading consciousness does not distinguish between what is one's own and another's, so he does not entertain hatred towards any creature. Just as mother earth does not think of giving support only to a superior and denying it to an inferior person (141-145), or the merciful life-breath does not say that it Will only dwell in the body of a prince and not in that of a pauper, or water does not think of quenching the thirst of cattle and turn itself into poison to kill tigers, so he is equally friendly with all creatures and looks after them like an affectionate nurse. He does not entertain the thought of "me" and "mine" and is never affected by happiness and misery. He is forgiving like the earth and joy lives happily in his lap (146-150).

14. *who is ever content practising yoga, self-controlled and of firm conviction, devoted to Me with his mind and intellect - such a devote is dear to Me.*

    Just as the sea is ever full of water even without rains, he is full of contestant without any formal devices. He restrains his mind taking a vow to do so, and his determination remains Arm till the end. The individual

Self and the Supreme self dwell in his heart in perfect unison. Endowed with abundant yoga, he also dedicates his mind and intellect to me and becoming purified both internally and externally worships me with devotion and love (151-155). O Arjuna, he alone is a devotee, a yogi and a liberated soul. I am so fond of him as if he were my spouse-nay he is dear to me as my own Self is. But even this simile falls short of conveying my true feeling about him. This account of a loved one is like a magical spell, which cannot be expressed in words. I had to give expression to it because of your strong faith. I had to give the simile of husband and wife to denote this love; otherwise how can one describe it'? O Arjuna, leave this alone. My love for the devotee is redoubled, when I speak about him {156-160). And if a dear hearer happens to be near, with what can you measure the joy that one feels? Therefore, O Arjuna, you are a loving devotee as well as a dear hearer, and so I am giving vent to my feelings about a loving devotee, as the occasion required it. This combination of a devotee and hearer in you became a happy occasion for this enjoyable conversation. Saying this the Lord began to swing backward and forward. He added, "Please get to know the characteristics of the devotee, whom I give a place in my heart".

15. *He whom the world does not vex, and who does not vex the world, and who is free from joy, irritation, fear and vexation, such a one is dear to Me.*

    A stormy sea does not create fear in the aquatic animals and does not itself become tired of them (164-165). In the same way, he does not become bothered because of the rude world, nor is the world troubled because of him. O Arjuna, just as the body is not tired of its limbs, he does not become weary of the living creatures. This is because he knows that I am the life, which dwells in all of them. As he looks upon the world as his own body, all thoughts of people being dear or disagreeable to him, leave him. In this way, the notion of duality leaves him and he does not feel joy or anger. I am enamoured of him who becomes free from the pairs of opposites such as pleasure and pain or fear and sorrow and worships me. How can I describe to you how I feel attracted to him'? In short, he lives only for my sake (166-170). He who is satiated by the bliss flowing from Self-knowledge, and who has attained the highest aim of life, becomes wedded to perfection.

16. *He who is inexpectant, pure, adroit, indifferent and without worry, and who has renounced every undertaking, such a devote of Mine is dear to Me.*

    O Arjuna, he is free from all expectations and his mind is full of increasing happiness. The holy place of Kashi is known for its generous gift of salvation, but for that, one has to part with his body there. Our sins are washed off in the Himalayas, but one has to risk his life in going there. However the purity in the saints is not dangerous like that. The sacred

water of the Ganges removes all sins and mental afflictions, but one is likely to get drowned there (171-175). Like the water of the Ganges the knowledge of the saints is deep and fathomless. But the devotee does not sink in their company; instead he becomes liberated even while living. The river Ganges gets rid of its sins by coming into contact with the saints (when they bathe in it). How superior in purity must be this contact of the saints? A saint by his purity lends support even to holy waters and drives away sinful thoughts from the minds (of those who come in contact with him). He is as clean and spotless in and out as the sun itself, and attains the experience of Brahman in the same way as a person born with his legs foremost sees a treasure buried under the earth. Just as the sky is all- pervasive and unattached, so his mind, while pervading all, is detached (176-180). Like a bird, which has escaped from the hands of a hunter and has shed fear, he becomes desireless and free from the anxiety of worldly life. He is ever blissful and does not feel the pricking of any worldly thing, like a dead body which is not ashamed of its nakedness. He does not suffer from egoism while performing any work. Just as fire is extinguished when it is not fed with firewood, he attains peace and his name is recorded on the checkerboard of liberation. In this way, he who has attained union with the In this way he who has attained union with Supreme Self reaches the other shore transcending duality {181-185). Dividing himself into two parts and designating one as the devotee and the other as God, he experiences the bliss of devotion and demonstrates to a non-devotee the proper way of devotion. I am fond of such a devotee and he becomes the object of my meditation. In short, I find great satisfaction, when I come across such a devotee. Incarnating myself I come to this world for his sake and he is so dear to me that I wave my life as a lamp before him.

17. *He who does not rejoice or resent, who does not grieve or crave, and who renounces good and evil, such a devotee is dear to Me.*

He does not value any thing as good as the realisation of the Self and so he does not derive any pleasure from sensual enjoyments (186-190). Since he has become fully conscious that he himself is the universe and got rid of the notion of duality, he does not entertain any feeling' of hatred for anyone. He is fully convinced that his true nature will remain indestructible even at the end of the epoch, and so does not lament the loss of anything. Since he has himself become Brahman beyond which there is nothing, he has no desire for anything. Just as the right and day do not exist for the sun, he does not distinguish between good and bad things. Although he has attained the state of uninterrupted knowledge, he still remains lovingly devoted to me (191-195). I say on oath that no one else is so truly dear to me as this devotee.

18. *He who is alike to friend and foe, as also in honour and dishonour, the same in heat and cold in happiness and sorrow free from attachment,*

    O Arjuna, he does not have even a trace of hostile feeling and so treats equally both a friend and an enemy. Just as a lamp does not think of giving light only to the inmates of the house and withhold it from strangers, or a tree gives shade without distinction to one who has planted it or one who has come to cut it, or sugarcane is not sweet to one who grows it or bitter to one who extracts juice from it squeezing it in a press, (196-200), so O Arjuna, he behaves evenly with friend and foe alike and regards honour and dishonour with the same feeling. Like the sky, which remains the same in all seasons, he treats equally heat and cold. Just as the Meru mountain remains unmoved while facing the southern or the northern wind, he remains unaffected by pleasure or pain, He treats all living beings equally like the moon-light which gives equal pleasure to a prince and a pauper.. Just as the entire world craves for water, so, all the three worlds are fond of him and like to have him as their own (201-205). Thus my devotee sheds love and attachment in and out for sensuous pleasures and remains in solitude Axing his mind on my essential nature.

19. *who is equable in praise or blame, silent and content with whatever comes, homeless and firm of mind, such a devote is dear to Me.*

    He is not distressed by hearing slander or elated by praise. As the sky remains unaffected by its contact with the clouds, he treats evenly both slander and praise and moves with an even temper in public and in solitude. (As his mind is free from desires] whatever he utters whether true or false does not affect his silence and he does not become satiated while experiencing the Brahmin State beyond the mind. Just as the sea never dries up in the absence of the rains, he never feels joy at any gain nor is he dejected at any loss (206-210). Like the wind who never remains at one place and 1s constantly on the move everywhere, he does not resort to a house and regards the whole world as his home. He is fully convinced that the entire universe is his home-nay, he has himself become the entire universe, both movable and immovable. Even in this state he remains still zealously devoted to me. I treat such a one as my crown and place him on my head. It is no wonder that one should bend one's head before such an exalted person. So all the three worlds honour him by taking the holy water of his feet (211-215). One should make Lord Shiva as his guru and learn from him how to show respect to the object of one's faith. But leave this alone. To praise Lord Shiva is really to indulge in self-praise and so this is not an apt illustration. I wish to reiterate that I bear my devotee on my head. Even when my devotee has secured in his hand liberation, the fourth object of man's existence, he still follows the path of devotion and sets an example to the world. As a priest of emancipation, he decides who should get liberation and who should not, and yet he remains lowly like

water (216-220). Therefore, I bow to him, hold him on my head and bear the mark of his heel on my chest. I embellish my speech by singing his praise and adorn my ears by hearing his encomiums. Though without eyes, I acquire vision to satisfy my strong longing to gaze at him. I worship him by offering him the lotus in my hand and take on two more arms in order to clasp him in a close embrace. Though I am formless, I have assumed a body in order to enjoy his companionship. In short, I am so fond him that I cannot describe my feeling for him by an appropriate simile (221-225). I feel somewhat strange in calling him my bosom friend. Those who pra1se him after hearing his life-story are also as dear to me as my life. O Arjuna, the yoga that I have described to you so far from the start is none other than the yoga of devotion. This devotee is so great that I shower My love on him, meditate upon him and bear him on my head.

20. *Those who partake of this elixir of duty as is taught herein with faith, being solely absorbed in Me- such devotees are exceedingly dear to Me.*

Those who hear this talk of yoga, which is sweet like a shower of nectar and accords with duty and turn it into self-experience (226-230), develop an expanding faith and respect for yoga and practice it, after holding it securely in their heart. If they have attained a state of mind as described by me, they realise its fruit as from the best seed sown in a fertile field. But only those who bear loving devotion towards me and regard me as their all-in-all and as their ultimate goal, are my true devotees and yogis and it is for them that I feel a strong longing. Those who are fond of hearing tales of devotion, are the holy waters, the sacred places and the holy ones (231-235). I meditate on them, they are the objects of my worship, and I hold none else as superior to them. I am extremely fond of them, who are our treasure and I find great satisfaction in meeting them. But, O Arjuna, I esteem those who take delight in recounting the tales of devotees as great gods.

Thus spoke Mukunda, the primal seed of the universe, the giver of joy to his devotees, said Sanjaya to Dhritarashtra. He added: O King, the Lord of Vaikuntha who is pure and perfect, merciful to the people, protector of those who have surrendered to him and are At for such surrender (236-240), whose constant sport is to render help to gods, to cherish and protect the worlds and those who have submitted to him, who is famous as the saviour of religion, who is the same to all because of his boundless generosity, who although powerful, became the bondman of Bali, who is compassionate to his devotees and frank with those who love him, who is the bridge which goes starlight to the Truth, and the very treasure-house of arts, is speaking and lucky Arjuna is listening. Now I shall continue the tale, which Lord Krishna will recount to Arjuna, so said Sanjaya to Dhritarashtra (241-245). Jnanadeva says, listen to the same story, which

will be translated in Marathi. I have been taught by my Guru Nivrittinatha to render this service to you (246-247).

Chapter Thirteenth

THE FIELD AND KNOWER OF THE FIELD

I cherish God Ganesha, who is identical with my Self. Then I bow at the feet of my Master, who is the abode of all lores. Whoever thinks of him masters the art of poetic composition and holds the lores at the tip of his tongue. He possesses such a sweet eloquence that it surpasses nectar and the nine sentiments take recourse to all his words. The exegesis discloses its secrets and explains the different doctrines. When our mind meditates upon the feet of the Master, then their meaning dawns upon us, the lucky ones (1-5). Bowing to the feet of his Master, Jnanadeva says that the Lord of Lakshmi, father of god Brahma, spoke thus,

The blessed Lord said:

1. *This body, O son of Kunti (Arjuna) is called the field He who knows this - him the knowers thereof calls the knower of the field.*

   O Partha, listen. This body is called the Field and he who knows this is said to be the Knower of the Field.

2. *Know Me as the knower of the Field in all the Fields, O Bharata. The knowledge of the Field and its knower is, in my view, true knowledge.*

   Know ye definitely that I am the Kshetrajna, who supports the Fields. To know the Field and the knower of the Field, I deem it as the true knowledge.

3. *What that Field is, and of what sort, how it has evolved, and what evolve from it, and who (the knower) is and what his powers are, hear that from Me in brief.*

   I shall tell you now why this body has been given the name of Field (6-10). Listen, I shall give you in detail its properties, how and where it originates, how it grows and with what modifications, whether it is limited to three and half cubits, how big it is and of what it is, whether barren or fertile and to whom it belongs. The Vedas have been talking about it all the time, while logic became loquacious in order to determine it. The six systems of philosophy came to their wits' end, but their debates have not come to an end. (11-15) It is for this reason that these systems have ceased to interact with one another and discussions have started all over the world

to bring about unanimity among them. So far there is no agreement among them, nor do they hold any reconciliation among the differing views. Reason has been powerless to bring about a consensus in these arguments and counter-arguments. No one knows to whom this Field belongs, but the desire to know it is so strong that its discussion has caused headaches in every household. As the Vedas girded themselves to fight the unbelievers, the latter indulged in senseless chatter. The unbelievers say that the grandiloquent statements of the Vedas are false and without any foundation and that if they disagree with this view, they are willing to accept the challenge and defeat them in a debate (16-20). Some unbelievers practice nudity, while others shave off their heads, but their wordy battles come to naught. The yogis started to protect these Fields, lest they should fall into the clutches of death and go to waste. Being afra1d of death, they resorted to solitude and practised self-control and sense-restraint. As the attachment to the Field came in the way of yogic practice, Lord Shiva abandoned his kingdom and made his home in the cemetery. Because of this pledge, he made the quarters his apparel (*resorted to nudity*) and burnt the cupid who tried to seduce him (21-25). God Brahma was endowed with four mouths in order to settle this issue, but he too was unable to know its power.

4. *The sages have sung it variously and severally in different Vedic hymns, and also in aphorisms on Brahman that is well reasoned and conclusive.*

   Some (ritualists*)* argue that this Field belongs to the individual Self and that the vital air is its tenant. In the house of the vital air labour his four brothers (other vital airs) and the farmer in the form of the mind supervises their work. The mind has ten pairs of bullocks in the form of ten sense-organs and toils hard day and might in the farm of sense-objects. Then missing the steam of scriptural injunctions, the embodied Self prepares the beds of misdeeds by sowing the seeds of injustice (26-30). Then he secures an abundant crop of sins, as a result of which he suffers pain in many births. On the other hand, if after making certain of the availability of the steam in the form of scriptural injunctions, he sows the seeds of meritorious deeds, he enjoys happiness in many births.

   On this some others (i.e. *Sankhyas*) say that this Field does not belong to the Self and that this matter should be referred to them for a decision. In this Field, they say, the Self-dwells as a wayfarer for a short time and the vital air is a field watchman who keeps awake day and night and protects him. The Field is the hereditary estate of the beginningless prakriti, whose fame is sung by the Sankhya thinkers. (31-35). Since the prakriti has all the necessary implernents, she herself cultivates the Field. The three qualities in this created world who originally cultivate this field were only born of her. The seed is sown by the rajas quality and it is protected by the sattva quality, while the tamas quality reaps the crop. Then she prepares

the threshing ground of mahat (the Great Principle) and gets the crop threshed by a bull in the form of Time, as a result of which all the subtle impressions of gross creations get heaped up in the Unmanifest.

But this did not find approval with the intellectuals (the proponents of divine Will). They said, yours is a modern idea. How can your prakriti hold its ground before the Supreme? We shall explain to you the entire position of the Field, you may well hear it. The divine Will was lying in a latent state in the bed-chamber in the form of formless Brahman. It awoke all of a sudden, and since it was always active, It found the treasure in the form of the universe in accordance with its desire. Then because of its exertions the three worlds, which were in a latent form in the garden of the formless Brahman, came to possess name and form. Then he brought together the barren lands in the form of gross elements and created therefrom four kinds of living beings born from the womb, sweat, eggs and soil (41-45). Then taking different portions of the Ave gross elements, human bodies were formed and embankments in the form of good and evil deeds were erected on both sides of them, making the barren land fertile. Then the divine will constructed underground paths of births and deaths, linking this created world with the supportless Brahman. Then that divines Will in co-operation with egoism created animate and inanimate universe. In this way from the void of Brahman the tree of divine Will brought forth many branches and so it is the cause of this worldly existence (46-50).

Then hearing these fine words others (i.e. naturalists) challenged them and said, "How wise of you to say all this! If your divine will can be said to remain latent in the Absolute, why should we not allow the prakriti of Brahman? Leave this alone and keep away from this discussion; we shall explain properly what this Field is. Now tell me, who fills the clouds in the sky with water? Who supports the stars in the sky? Who is it that has stretched the canopy of the sky and when? Whose will has ordained that the wind should always keep blowing? (51-55). Who sows the seeds which sprout into hair on the human body? Who fills up the ocean with water? Who sends the showers of rain? In the same way the Field is produced as a result of its natural disposition, and no one has a hereditary right over it. He who looks after it and none else will reap its fruit."

On this the advocates of Kala *(Time as Destroyer)* retort in anger, "If what you say is true, then why has Kala sway over this Field? Even after knowing the formidable assault of Kala, people stick in pride to their own particular doctrines. This Kala is dreadful like a den of lions. If after knowing this you indulge in empty talk, how will it help you (56-60)? This Kala will hold in his fatal grip all of a sudden even the blessed denizens of Satyaloka at the final dissolution of the world. He enters the heavenly woods and destroys the eight regents and elephants that guard the eight quarters. In the whirl of this Kala, the deer in the form of human beings

become dispirited and wander in the pits of births and deaths. Just see how this Kala has spread out his paw and has held in it the elephant in the form of the world and so the supremacy of this Kala over the Field is the sole truth.

O Arjuna, these are different views about the Field. (61-65) It is recorded in the Puranas that the sages in the Naimisha forest held discussions on this Field. The Vedas have expounded their theory about this field in metres such as the anushtabha and people take pride in them in support of their views. Even the Brihatsama in the Vedas which is holy from the point of view of its knowledge, does not know this Field. Many learned men have laboured to determine the nature of this field, what it is, how great it is, and under whose control (66-70). Now I shall tell you in detail about - this Field such as it is.

5. *The (five) gross elements, egoism, intellect and the unmanifest, the ten senses and the one (mind) and the five objects of senses,*
6. *Desire, aversion, pleasure, pain, the aggregate, intelligence, firmness this is the field as briefly described together with its modifications.*

Five gross elements, egoism, intellect, prakriti, ten sense organs and the eleventh mind, ten sense-objects, pleasure and pain desire and hatred, the psychic organism, intelligence and steadiness- these thirty-six principles constitute the field. Now I shall tell you one by one what the gross elements, senses and sense-objects are (71-75). It is mentioned that the gross elements are the Earth, the Water, the Fire, the Wind and the Sky. Just as one does not see a dream in the wakeful state, or the moon on the New Moon day, the youth in a child, or fragrance in a bud, in short, O Arjuna, just as fire is hidden in firewood, so egoism is latent in the womb of prakriti Just as the fever seated in the bones only waits for the faulty diet and then makes itself felt all over the body, (76-80) so egoism makes the body dance as soon as the gross elements combine to form a body. This egoism has an unusual feature, namely that it does not affect the ignorant, but seizes the wise man by the neck and makes things difficult for him. Now I shall tell you the characteristics by which you can recognise the intellect, so said the prince of the Yadavas. When the desire grows strong and the senses conquer their objects and offer the booty of pleasure and pain to a person, intellect decides what is the proportion of pleasure and pain in the thing so presented. (81-85)' It distinguishes between pleasure and pain, merit and sin, the pure and the impure. Thus a living being comes to know what is lofty and low, big and small and examines the sense-objects. So, that which is the source of knowledge and is the advanced state of sattva quality and which is on the borderline of the Self and its embodied form, that, O Arjuna, is the intellect.

Now hear about the characteristics of the Unmanifest. Know that the Unmanifest is the same as the prakriti of the Sankhyas (86-90). Earlier (in chapter VII) you have heard about two types of prakriti described by Me. The second or the higher type of prakriti, designated as jiuadasha, is also known as Unmanifest. Just as after daybreak the stars disappear and after sunset activities of living beings come to a stop, or as with the fall of the body, all conditioning factors *(upadhis)* remain as impressions of past actions, or as the tree remains latent in its seed or as piece of cloth is contained in the yarn-form (91-95), so, that in which the gross elements and their modifications remain in their subtle form, after shedding their gross forms, know that, O Arjuna, to be the Unmanifest.

Now, hear about the senses. Ears, eyes, skin, nose- and tongue are the Ave sense organs. When these five senses combine to form a sensation, the intellect decides whether the sensation will conduce to pleasure or pain. Besides these, speech, hands, feet, anus and the sexual organ are Ave more sense organs (96-100) which are known as the organs of action, so said Shri Krishna, the Lord of liberation. The power of action, which is the mate of prana, brings about the activity of the body through these fire sense organs. The Lord said, so I have told you about the ten sense organs. Now I shall explain to you clearly the nature of the mind. That which is at the junction of the sense organs and intellect and plays its part in a capricious manner riding on the shoulder of the rajas quality is the mind. The mind is an illusory thing like the bluish colour of the sky or the unreal wave of the mirage (101-105) When the body is formed from the gross elements as a result of the union of semen and blood *(ovum*), then the vital air transforms itself into ten kinds. Then these ten kinds of vital air dwell in their respective parts of the body according to their nature. The pure fickleness which exists in these ten vital airs become separate from them and gets support from the strength of the rajas quality. This fickleness plays a powerful part in between the intellect and egoism. It is given the fictitious name of mind, but it is a mere notion which is responsible for the embodiment of the Self (106-110) and is the cause of activity. It is that which promotes passion, incites the ego, increases desire, strengthens hope and reinforces fear. It is that which gives rise to the notion of duality, promotes ignorance and pushes the sense organs towards their sense-objects. It is that which creates the world of fancy and immediately razes it, as if forming castles in the air and then pulling them down. It is that which is the house of delusion and the inner essence of the vital air, which has locked up the intellect (111-115). It is this, which is called the mind.

Now hear about objects of senses with their names. Sound, touch, form, taste and smell are the five objects of the senses. Just as an animal, after seeing green grass, becomes bewildered and runs helter-skelter, so knowledge runs outside through these Ave outlets. Then the utterance of

sound and letters, the action of seizing and casting away, movement and discharge of faeces and urine are the five objects of the senses and through these proceeds the activity of the body (116-120). These are the five sense-objects in the body and I shall now describe the nature of desire.

Desire is that state of the mind which results from the recollection of a past experience or a sound heard before or it is that state of mind ' which arises speedily out of passionate craving when the sense organs and their objects meet. As a result of' this mind runs helter-skelter and tastes the forbidden fruit. That mental state which relishes the sensual pleasures and deludes the intellect is known as desire. (121-125) And the mental state which arises when the senses are deprived of their sensuous enjoyments is said to be hatred. Now pleasure is that mental state, which makes one, forgets other things. When it is attained it brings to a stop all the activities of the body. Speech and the mind, makes the body forget itself, paralyses the vital air, enforces the sattvika sentiments and gathers all the functions of the senses in the heart and coaxes them to sleep (126-130) In short, that mental state in which the embodied Self comes into contact with the Self is called happiness. And to live without attaining this state is itself misery. Happiness is not attained when the mind is attached to desires, and in the absence of desire it is a natural and self-existent state. So pleasure and pain depend upon the absence and existence of desire.

Now, O Arjuna, when the body is under the sway of the Self, which is the detached witness of everything, there results what is known as intelligence. It is ever awake, pervading the body from head to feet and remains unchanged in all the three states of wakefulness, dreaming and deep slumber. (131-135) It keeps the mind, intellect etc. fresh and the wood in the form of prakriti in full bloom as in spring. It pervades without doubt all things, animate as well as inanimate, in more or less proportions. Just as the army under the command of a king, who does not know how big it is, defeats his enemy, or the sea gets its tidal wave with the appearance of the moon; or the iron moves in the proximity of the magnet; or the affairs of the world are carried on in sunlight; or the chick of a female, tortoise is fed by her mere glance (136-140), so the inner parts of the body are animated by the presence of the Self dwelling in it. This is what is known as intelligence. Now listen to the description of the distinctive forms of steadiness. The five gross elements are hostile to one another by their very nature. Does not water denude the earth? Fire dries up the water and is opposed to the wind, while the sky easily swallows the wind. Just as the sky pervades everything, but remains separate without combining with it (141-145), so these five gross elements remain in unison in the body. They give up their mutual strife and help one another with their natural qualities. That which brings about and sustains such unity, which is usually not possible, is firmness.

O son of Pandu, the combination of these principles together with life is known as the aggregate, the thirty-sixth principle. I have thus, explained to you clearly the thirty-six principles which taken together are known by the famous name of Field. (146-150). When all the component parts of a chariot come together. they are known is the chariot; so all the limbs of the body from head to feet form the body. Just as the elephants, the assemblage of chariots, horses and infantry gets the name 'army' and the combination f letters is known as a sentence, when the clouds assemble they are known as the cloudy sky, so all the worlds form the universe. When oil, wick and fire come together, they get the name of a lamp. In the same way, when these thirty-six principles come together, their assemblage is known as the Field. The cultivation of this physical body yields the crop of merit and demerit and so we call it 'Field' in admiration and some name it 'body'. It has many different names. In fact, all things in this world with the exception of' the Supreme Self, take birth and die and constitute this Field. They are born in different species such as gods, human beings, serpents. but they do so in accordance with their qualities and past actions. These qualities will be described in detail later on (in chapter XIV; 156-160). So I have told you all the distinctive characteristics of the Field along with its modifications.

Now I shall explain to you the highest knowledge. For the sake of this knowledge, Yogis bypass heaven and swallow the sky. Some disregard prosperity and miraculous powers and scorn the hard method of yoga. Some cross the fortress of austerities, while others may offer many sacrifices and uproot the plants of religious rites (by giving up their fruit). Many follow the path of worship and wander about naked, while others practicing Hathayoga go through the secret path of Sushumna (161-165). With an intense longing for this knowledge, some rummage the leaves of Vedas (to discover the right path). In the hope of acquiring, this knowledge through the service of the Guru, some surrenders their many lives to him. This knowledge destroys ignorance and brings about the union of the embodied Self with the Supreme Self. It closes the doors of the senses, diminishes activity and dispels anxiety of the mind. With the attainment of this knowledge, the sense-duality disappears and the Self realises its identify with the Supreme Self (166-170). That knowledge destroys the ego, devours the great delusion, and banishes all talk or 'mine' and 'others'. It uproots worldly existence, cleanses the impurity of desire and embraces the all-pervading Brahman. Its attainment cripples the vital air *(prana*) and under its authority the world carries on its affairs. From its light intellect derives its vision and life remains on the crest, of joy. This knowledge is the sole reservoir of sanctity which purifies the mind soiled by the! objects of senses. (171-175) Its attainment is a complete cure for the disease of consumption in the form of delusion, because of which the pure Self thinks itself to be the body.

This knowledge is difficult to explain, but I am going to make it comprehensible to you. It is not true that it cannot be seen by the physical eyes. For when the body becomes permeated by the power of this knowledge, its symptom become visible through the actions of the sense organs. Just as the blossoming of the trees indicates the advent of the spring, so the actions of sense organs bear testimony to knowledge. O Partha, one comes to know whether the tree is watered or not from its spreading branches (176-180). The fresh and blooming blossoms bear evidence of the softness of the soil. Birth in a noble family and good breeding of a person can be known from his unimpeachable conduct or friendship becomes apparent from the hospitality shown. If one attains serenity of mind at the sight of a person, he instantly recognises that he has met a saintly person. The camphor in the camphor tree makes its presence felt by its fragrance or a lamp kept in a pane of glass sheds its light outside. In the same way, knowledge in his mind makes itself felt through certain traits, which I shall now explain. Listen carefully.

7. *Absence of pride and hypocrisy, non-injury, forbearance, uprightness, service of the teacher, purity, steadfastness and self-restraint,*

He does not like being compared with anybody, and feels it a burden if anyone calls him great (181-185). If anyone praises his virtues, or shows him respect or describes his calibre, he becomes nervous like a deer blockaded by a hunter or like a swimmer caught in a whirlpool. O Partha, he finds himself in a predicament, if he receives the applause of the people, and he does not want any importance given to him. When he thinks, "I do not want to see people showing reverence to me or hear my fame from their lips or even like people to remember me specially", how can one pay homage to him or how would he accept it? He feels it a great calamity if someone bows to him (186-190). Although his knowledge is as encyclopaedia as that of Brihaspati (the preceptor of gods), he conceals it for fear of becoming a celebrity and behaves like an idiot. He hides his wisdom and greatness, and likes to show himself as an idiot. He feels disgusted at his popularity, is tired of religious debates, and has a great liking for quiet life. He heartily wishes that people should take no notice of him and that his kith and kin should give up worrying about him. He usually performs such actions as will promote modesty and humility in him. (191-195) He adopts such a life style as to make the people care less whether he is living or dead. He wishes that the people should begin to doubt whether he is walking on his legs or borne by the wind. He prays to God that people should ignore his existence and even forget his name and no living being should be afraid of him. He prefers solitude and is glad to see an uninhabited place. He likes to make friends with the wind, to talk to the sky and to hold the trees dearer than his life (196-200). In short, when a person displays these traits, he should be known to have attained

knowledge. That quality which is known as absence of pride should be recognised by these characteristics.

Now I shall tell you my view as to how one should recognise the absence of hypocrisy in a person. A miser never discloses his hidden wealth even under the threat of death; so, oh Partha even at the risk of his life he will not mention his good deeds. A naughty cow withholds its milk or a harlot conceals her advanced age. (201-205) A rich man does not put on airs of his wealth, when he is caught in a difficult situation in the forest. A married woman from a good family does not expose her body, and when a farmer sows the corn, he covers it up with soil. In the same way he keeps secret his charity and good actions. He does not adorn his person, nor implore others for favours and nor announce the charities given by him. He does not speak about the favours granted to others, nor boast about his learning and he never sells his knowledge in order to earn fame. He seems niggardly in spending money on his personal enjoyments, but he spends lavishly on charity (206-210). He suffers great want in his home comforts, his body becomes lean and emaciated, but he vies with the wish- yielding tree in giving alms. In short, he is great in doing his religious duties, very generous on right occasions, skilled in debate on self-knowledge, but he behaves like an mad man in other respects. The banana tree appears outwardly light and hollow, but it bears a bumper crop of juicy fruits. Usually the clouds appear light and soft and liable to be scattered by the wind, but it is wonderful how they can send such heavy showers. In the same manner seeing him so full of wisdom, the heart is thoroughly pleased, but outwardly he seems to be lacking in other things (211-215). Know that the person in whom these traits appear in full measure has attained wisdom. O Arjuna, that which is known as absence of hypocrisy is nothing else but this. I shall now explain to you the nature of non-violence, listen.

Now non-violence has been defined in different ways by different schools of thought. Just as one constructs a hedge at the foot of a tree by cutting its branches or satisfies one's hunger by cutting and cooking one's hands or builds an enclosure to the sanctuary with the materials obtained by pulling down the temple (216-220), so the Mimamsakas *(ritualizes)* hold that when animals are killed in sacrificial rites, this slaughter is tantamount to non-injury. When the people are tormented by famine, they perform sacrifices to get rain; but animals are slaughtered at the very start of these sacrifices. In these circumstances by committing violence how can one see the distant shore of non-violence? How can non- violence grow, where only the seeds of violence are sown? But this desire of the ritualistic to achieve non-violence through violence is truly remarkable.

O Arjuna, the Ayurveda also lays down that it is permissible to sacrifice a life to save another life. (221-225). This science saw many beings

knocked down by various diseases and devised treatment to alleviate their suffering. In this treatment. they dig out roots of trees and in some cases uproot the tree along with their roots and branches. They cut some trees in the middle, strip the others of their barks and bake the pith of some trees in a pot. The innocent trees which bear no enmity to others are cracked all over and thus reduced to a lifeless and dry state. They cut the bellies of live creatures in order to take out the bile and save human beings suffering from diseases (226-230). This is like pulling down homes in order to build temples and shrines. opening free kitchens by robbing people in trade, covering the head by keeping the posterior bare. erecting a pavilion by pulling down a house, or making a fire to warm oneself by burning the blanket or like giving a bath to the elephant or building a cowpen by selling a bull or buying a cage after driving away the parrot. How can one describe it? Is it useful work or mockery? Should one laugh it away or jeer at it? In one *(Jain)* tradition it is the custom to drink water after straining it through a piece of cloth. killing in that process many vermins. {231-235) Some do not cook grain for fear of causing injury, but they cause torture to their own bodies, which is 1tself injury.

Try to understand O Arjuna, this perverse doctrine of the ritualistic that violence committed in accordance with scriptural injunction amounts to non-violence. I had a mind to tell you all this at very outset, so that you can know such spurious non-violence properly and avoid it. These views usually figure in any discussion of non-violence. 6therwise, who would like to deviate from the straight-forward course (of explaining one's own views) (236-240)? Moreover, O Arjuna. it is essential to take note of the relevant doctrines of other systems in order to explain one's propositions clearly. This is the usual method of discussion.

Now I shall tell you my own view of non-violence. If one sees these characteristics of non-violence in a person, one can be sure that he has attained knowledge. Just as gold can be tested on the touchstone. so one can judge from his conduct whether he is imbued with true non-violence or not. Now hear, O Arjuna, how on the attainment of knowledge his mind becomes impressed with non-violence. (241-245) Just as the crane, Axing its eyes on the prey, swiftly but cautiously treads the water without disturbing and breaking the ripples or as the bee lands lightly on the lotus for fear of crushing the pollens in it, so realising that even the particles of dust are covered by tiny creatures, he (the non-violent person), places his feet cautiously on the ground out of compassion. In whatever direction he goes, he fills it up with affection and takes care of the tiny life under his feet more than his own life (246-250). When he walks, O Arjuna, in this cautious way, no one can describe the magnitude of his non-violent nature in words. Just as a she-cat holds its kitten in its teeth lovingly without hurting it, or an affectionate mother looks at her infant with a tender glance or a sore eyelid gets relief when it is fanned with a lotus-leaf, he walks

over the ground in such a gentle way that if a worm comes into contact with his feet it feels happy (251-255). O Arjuna, if he sees a worm or an ant while walking, he beats a retreat. He turns back without treading upon any tiny creature with the compassionate thought that his noisy step would disturb the sleep of the all-pervading self in the tiny creature and affect his composure. When he does not tread upon the grass for fear of hurting any life, how is it possible that he would trample over a creature after seeing it? Just as an ant cannot scale the Meru mountain or a fly cannot cross the sea, so he would not step over any creature he comes across (256-260).

Just as his walk bears fruit in clemency, his speech is also full of compassion. His breathing is gentle, his mouth the very abode of charm, while his teeth are like sprouts of sweetness. So when he begins to speak, first love oozes out from his mouth and then the kind words follow. To the extent possible he does not talk to others and if such an occasion arises, he prefers silence, fearing that his speech would offend someone or touch a tender spot, or create a doubt (261-265) in somebody's mind or spoil somebody's plan or startle or cause pain to somebody or someone may disregard his speech or raise his eyebrows and look at him wrathfully But if anyone makes a request. he speaks with affection and then h1s speech gives pleasure to the hearer, as if the words were coming from his parents. His speech is then truthful but soft, moderate but straight like nectar, as if the mystic sound has assumed form or the sacred water of the Ganges has splashed up or a chaste lady has grown old (266-270). His speech avoids subjects, which are contentious or controversial or likely to cause pain and also words calculated to ridicule, rebuke or touch somebody to the quick. His speech has also shed such faults as stubbornness, excitement, deceit, hope. doubt and fraud.

Similarly his glance is always straight and his eyebrows are never raised in anger. Realising that the Self dwells in every creature, he avoids seeing anyone lest his glance might cause it anguish. Were he by chance to open his eyes with a kind heart (271-275), then the person at whom he looks derives immense satisfaction. It is as though the ambrosial moonbeams, though invisible, satisfy the hunger of a chakora bird. Even the tortoise does not know this sort of affection in its glance by which it nurtures its young chicks.

As his glance is pleasing, so his hands are also benevolent. Just as the yogis who have attained fulfilment are devoid of desire, so his hands are devoid of activity. Just as a feeble person gives up work, or a fire is extinguished for want of fuel, or a dumb person takes the vow of silence (276-280), there is nothing left for his hands to do and so they remain unoccupied. He does not move his hand, lest they should give a jerk to the wind or scratch the sky with his nails. Then how is it possible that he should drive away the fly on his person or the midges before his eyes or

frighten the animals and birds or do such other things? He does not like to carry a rod or a stick in his hand. How then can he think of wielding a weapon? He does not like to rotate a lotus even in play or indulge in flinging a wreath of flowers for fear that it will act like a sling and cause hurt to creatures (281-285). He does not caress anyone for fear of disturbing the hair on his body and grows his nails without cutting them to avoid injury. Usually, he keeps his hands disengaged, but if at all he moves them, it is because he is accustomed to join his hands in a bow. He is abashed at giving the sign of safety, or lending a hand to a falling person or caressing a person in distress. Even the moonbeams do not possess the tenderness with which he removes the sufferings of others. When compared to his soft touch, even the breeze flowing from the Malaya mountain appears harsh, and with the same gentle touch he caresses the animals (286-290). His hands are always free and unoccupied, but they are like the cool parts of a sandalwood tree, which, though not bearing fruits, are not fruitless. Enough of this rhetoric. The actions of a good person are in perfect harmony with his temperament and character.

How then is his mind? Is it necessary to make a separate mention of it? To whom does all this play that is described belong? Do not the branches form the tree? Can the sea exist without water? Are the sun and his rays different? Are the limbs separate from the body or is fluid different from water (291-295)? Therefore, know that whatever external activities of the senses have been referred to so far belong to the mind. Just as the seed which is sown in the soil comes out as tree, so the mind radiates through the senses. If non-violence does not exist in the mind, how will it flow out of the sense organs? O Arjuna, an idea first springs in the mind, and then it finds an expression through the mouth, sight and hands. How can a thing, which is not in the mind issue forth in speech? Can a seedling ever sprout without a seed in the soil? (296-300). When the mind loses its essential nature, the activities of the senses come to a stop, like a puppet without the person who pulls its strings. If the water of a stream dries up at its very source, how can it be in its flow? How can the body move after the life has left it? In the same way, O Arjuna, all the activities of the senses originate from the mind, which acts through them. So whatever desire is held by the mind expresses itself as the activity of the senses. For this reason, if the mind is imbued with non-violence, it is conveyed to the senses, as the smell of a ripe fruit spreads out in all directions (301-305). Borrowing the capital of non-violence from the mind the sense organs deal in it. Just as the sea in tide floods the creeks, so the mind makes over its wealth of non-violence to the sense organs. In short, as the teacher, holding the hand of his pupil, makes him write the letters, so the mind transmits its kindness to the senses and makes them follow non-violence. In this way, O Arjuna, the mind directs the activities of the senses (306-310). Thus, whoever has renounced violence physically, mentally as well

as in speech, know that he is the very temple of knowledge. Why say more? He is knowledge in flesh and blood. If anyone wishes to see with his own eyes non-violence about which we have heard so much or which we have discussed on the authority of scripture, he should see this person.

(Janadeva says) I should have told you in one sentence what the Lord said. Pray forgive me for dilating upon it. You might think that as the animal while grazing forgets to go back or a bird flies in the sky along with the wind (311-315), so my intellect was carried away by the warmth of love (for the subject) resulting in the detailed description of the literary sentiments (rasas) and that I could not control myself. But, such is not the case; there is a sound reason for this expansion. Otherwise the word ahinsa is made up of only three letters and its theory can be expressed only in a few words. But one will get a clear idea of non-violence only on refutation of mistaken views about it. You would not have liked it if I had presented my view without confuting such mistaken notions of non-violence. Only blackstones (Shaligrama) will be sold in the town of jewellers, so one should untie the bundle of such stones and not try to sell crystals there by praising them. (316-320) Where even flour is sold in small quantities, who will care to buy fragrant camphor there? Therefore, O my masters, I felt that you would not like my oration on this subject. You will not even care to hear my statements in mass, made without discriminating between ordinary and distinguished hearers. You will lose interest, if the propositions I make become obscure with doubts. Do the swans ever look at the water covered with moss? (321-325) If the moonbeams come from behind the clouds, the chakora bird would not even care to open its beak to enjoy them. If my exposition is not beyond doubt, you will not come to me and hold my work in hand: you will only be cross with me. If, while explaining my point of view, I did not refute the objections of others, such a discourse will not lead to a common bond of amity between us. I am composing this work with the sole object of earning your approbation and keeping you favourably disposed to me.

Truly speaking, I know that you are ardent admirers of the Gita and so I have clasped it to my bosom. (326-330) You will be able to redeem it only by giving all that you possess. This is, therefore, not a composition, but your deposit kept with me. If you value your possessions more than this deposit, then both the Gita and myself will be reduced to the same state (of neglect). I do not wish to say more, I only need your favour and for that I have started explaining the Gita. I mentioned the divergent views on non-violence in order to make this discourse fit for you, because you are an audience of connoisseurs. So this narration has expanded to such an extent that it has digressed from the meaning of the original verse. Please forgive me, your child, for these lapses (331-335). If one takes time to east out a pebble found while chewing food, it should not be treated as waste

of time, as it has to be cast out. If a son has taken a day more -to get rid of a polished thief on the way and returned safe, should the mother get cross with him for the delay or receive him joyfully and wave before him Neem leaves to ward off evil? But these illustrations are not appropriate. I should only implore you to bear with my prattle. Now listen to what the Lord said.

The Lord said, O clever Arjuna gives me your attention. I shall now mention to you those traits by which you will recognise knowledge. Know that he who extends forbearance to a person without giving him cause for complaint possesses knowledge (336-340). Just as lotus creepers grow in deep lake, or wealth increases in the house of a fortunate person, in the same way I shall tell you those signs by which one can judge whether forbearance is on the increase in a person. He faces all good or bad situations with the same suavity with which we wear ornaments of our choice. He does not feel bad even when he is harassed by the threefold afflictions. He rejoices equally with the acquisition of a desirable thing or of an undesirable object. He bears, with composure and equanimity, honour and dishonour, and also pleasure and pain and his mind is not affected with censure or praise. He does not feel the heat of the sun or shiver in cold and has no fear when faced with any situation. Just as the Meru mountain does not feel the burden of its peak or the boar incarnation of Lord Vishnu did not find the earth heavy or the earth does not feel the crowding together of animate and inanimate beings, so he is not troubled by pleasure or pain. Even though many rivers in floods join the sea, the latter holds them in its bosom (346-350); in the same way he not only bears everything quietly but is not even aware of doing so. He accepts all things that befall him as parts of himself and so he does not feel that he is doing anything extraordinary in bearing them. He who possesses such unsullied forbearance brings glory to knowledge. Such a person, O Arjuna, becomes the very life of knowledge.

Now I shall tell you the nature of straightforwardness. This straightforwardness is like the life-breath, which favours all equally without likes or dislikes. Just as the sun does not give light after seeing the faces or the sky provides space to all without discrimination. in the same way he does not treat beings differently whether in his thought or behaviour. He has the acquaintance and long standing kinship with the world, so that he does not make any distinction like 'mine' or' of others.' He makes friends with every one and he favours all like water. He does not bear a grudge against anyone. His mental attitudes are as straight as the sweep of the wind and he is free from desire and doubt. (356-360). Just as a child does not feel any hesitation in approaching its mother, so he does not feel diffident in placing his views before the world. Just as a flower in bloom cannot hide its fragrance, so he cannot keep his feelings concealed in a corner of his mind. As a faultless jewel sends forth its sparkle, so the actions issuing from his pure mind are equally pure. Satiated with the

experience of the Self, he does not sit cogitating over things. He does not hold his mind in leash nor does he leave it absolutely free. He does not harbour deceit, his speech is not equivocal nor does he bear ill-will to anybody (361-365). All his senses are straightforward, free from deceit and pure and all his five life-breaths are ever free. His heart is as straight as the flow of nectar. In short, he is the very home of all these qualities. Know that such a person is straightforwardness in flesh and blood and knowledge dwells in him.

Now I shall tell you about devotion to the Guru; listen, O prince among the clever. This devotion to the Guru is the source of all fortunes and it makes even a care-worn person At for union with the Supreme (365-370). Now I am going to reveal to you this devotion to the Guru, give me your undivided attention. Just as the river Ganges joins the sea with its wealth of water, or the Vedas enter the abode of the Supreme or a chaste wife dedicates her life with its good and bad points to her husband, so he dedicates his heart along with his senses to the family of his Guru and becomes verily the temple of devotion to him. Just as a wife keeps on thinking of her absent husband, the thoughts of the place where his Guru dwells crowd in his mind (371-375). He welcomes the wind which blows from the direction of his Guru's place and invites him to visit his home. He is crazy because of his devotion to the Guru and so he likes to talk to the direction in which his Guru's house lies, and he regards that house as his hereditary estate. But like the calf which is confined in the cowpen being tied with a tether, he has to remain alone in his own village as directed by his Guru. He is ever anxious to know when he will be free to see the Guru and Ands every moment of his separation from him as long as an epoch. If someone arrives from the Guru's place or somebody is sent by the Guru himself, he feels like one who, while at the death's door, gets a fresh lease of life (376-380), or like a withering seedling which receives a shower of nectar, or like a fish in a pond which finds itself in the ocean, or like a beggar who Ands a treasure or like a blind man who recovers his sight or like a pauper who secures the lordship of heaven. Likewise he becomes overpowered by joy and at the mention of his Guru's name, he feels like clasping the sky in his arms. If you see such devotion to his preceptor's family, know definitely that knowledge becomes his steward.

Then with his heart filled with great devotional love for his Guru, he practises meditation upon his image (381-385). He installs his Guru as the titular deity in his pure heart and himself becomes with his heart and soul all the articles needed for his worship. He installs the phallus of Lord Shiva in the form of his Guru in the temple of bliss within the courtyard of knowledge and sprinkles nectar in the form of meditation on him. When the sun of Self-knowledge dawns upon him, he fills his basket in the form of intellect with flowers of righteous feelings and offers hundred thousand flowers to Lord Shiva in the form of his Guru. Taking morning, noon and

evening as the holy hours of the day, he burns the incense of the body and waves the lamp of knowledge before him. He makes a food offering to the Guru in the form of union with Brahman and imagining him to be the phallus emblem of Lord Shiva, becomes its worshipper (386-390). On occasions his 'intellect conceives the Guru as the spouse and enjoys his company and love on the bed in the form of the Self. At times his mind becomes so flooded with this love for his Guru that he calls that love the sea of milk. Then he imagines that the happiness resulting from his meditation is the 'Shesha' bedstead and the Guru is the Narayana reclining thereon. He imagines himself to be the goddess Lakshmi rubbing His feet and also as Garuda who stands nearby (with folded hands). He imagines himself to be taking birth from the navel of Lord Vishnu in the form of his Guru and experiences blissful meditation mentally with devotion to the image of his Guru (391-395). On some occasion he imagines his Guru to be his mother and rolls on his lap as a suckling infant. O Arjuna, he thinks his Guru as a cow resting under the tree of knowledge and himself as the calf sitting behind her. At times he fancies himself to be the fish swimming in the water of Guru's grace. On other occasions, he imagines the Guru's grace to be a shower of nectar and himself as a plant in the form of servitude. He entertains such different fancies in respect of his Guru. See how limitless is his love! He fancies himself to be the chick, with no eyes and wings (396-400) fed by the beak of the mother-bird in the form of the Guru. He imagines the Guru to be his swimmer with himself holding on to the tuck of his dhoti (while swimming in the sea of life). Just as there arises waves after waves in a sea in high tide, meditation produces meditation one after another arising out of his deep love. How can I describe the various shapes which his fancy takes? Thus he enjoys the bliss of meditation arising from his devotion of love for his Guru.

Now I shall explain to you the external service which he thinks he can render to his Guru. He resolves to serve his Guru in such a way that he will be pleased and tell him to ask for a boon. If I succeed in pleasing my Master, I shall make this prayer to him (401-405). I shall say to him, "O my Master, I shall become all your retinue" I shall become each and every article required for his service. I shall seek this boon from the Guru and when he says 'Amen' I shall become all his personal accessories. You will then see the miraculous service which I render to the Guru. My Master is like a mother to many disciples, but I shall put him on oath that he should extend his motherly love only to me (406-410).

I shall act in such a way that my Master will become full of fondness for me, solely devoted to me and reserve his entire affection for me. In whatever way the wind blows, it is confined within the four quarters; in the same way I shall become the cage for his favour. I shall fancy loyal service to my Master as my mistress and decorate her with the ornaments

in the form of my good qualities. In fact I shall become the sole repository of devotion for the Guru. I shall become the land for receiving the showers of my Guru's love. In this way he goes on building castles in the air of various sorts in his mind. He says, "I shall become my Master's house and serve him as his houseman (411-415). I shall become the threshold which the Guru crosses while entering and going out of the house. I shall become all the doors of his house and also the door-keeper. I shall be his wooden slippers and make him wear them. I shall become his parasol as also his parasol-bearer. I shall become his mace-bearer and caution him of the dips and bumps on the way. I shall hold the fly-whisker (chauari) over him, also become the hand supporting him and his page walking ahead of him. I shall be his valet who will hold the goblet of water, with which he can rinse his mouth and also become the basin to receive the spit-out water. I shall give him the roll of betel leaves and also receive the residue chewed him and make proper arrangement for his bath (416-420). I shall become his seat, his ornaments, his apparel, and the sandal paste etc. I shall be his cook and shall serve him a meal and shall also wave the lamp of my soul before his face. I shall keep him company at meal time. and then I shall offer him the roll of betel leaves. I shall remove the plate from which he ate his food, shall spread his bed and massage his feet. I shall become the sofa on which the Guru will sit. Thus, I shall perform my vow to serve him to the best of my abilities (421-425). I shall render him marvelous service by becoming everything which his body will touch. I shall become all the forms which his kind eyes will see. I shall be all the dishes which will please his palate and I shall serve his nostrils by becoming all the scents. Thus, he feels that he should extend all such service to the Guru (426-430).

Jnanadeva says, "I want to render service in this way so long as my body lasts. But I should still wish to serve him even after I lose my body. I shall mingle the earth element of my body with the earth on which my Guru treads. I shall mix the water element in the body in the water touched by my Master. I shall merge the Are element in my body with the light which is waved before the face of my Guru, or which is in the temple of the Guru. In the fly- whisker and the fan of the Guru, wherever they may be, I shall mingle my life breath and 'become the wind to serve him (431-435). I shall mix the sky element in my body in the space occupied by the Guru along with his retinue. I will not, whether dead or alive, allow any interruption in ' service to the Guru and will not allow anyone else to render service to him even for a moment. Epochs after epochs will pass in this way in such service rendered by me to the Guru."

In his keen desire to serve the Guru, he knows neither day nor night nor more nor less' and becomes thoroughly pleased if the Guru'.' entrusts more work to him. He becomes as great' as the sky in serving his Guru and renders all the requisite service single-handed in time (436-440). In

this respect his body runs ahead of his mind and its actual execution exceeds his' fondest wish. At times he is prepared to sacrifice his life in order to fulfil the playful wish of his' Guru. He becomes lean in the service of the ' Guru, but is nourished by his love. He becomes, the rightful recipient of the Master's command. He thinks himself respectable because of his association with the Guru's family and noble because of his affection for his brother disciples, and rendering service to the Guru becomes his passion. He looks upon, the rites and duties belonging to the tradition of his Guru as the duties in the stages of his life and the service of the Guru as his obligatory duty (441-445); The Guru is for him the holy place (tirtha), he is his God, his mother and father, and he knows' no other path leading to liberation. The door of; his Guru's house is his all and he shows affection to the servants of the Guru as if they were his real brothers. He chants esoteric formula (mantra) of the guru's name and he does not touch any scriptures other than the Guru's precepts. He considers the water touched by his Guru's feet as equal to the holy waters in all the three worlds. When he gets the left-over of the food tasted by his Guru to eat, he regards with contempt even the bliss of deep meditation (446-450). He experiences the bliss of salvation by placing on his head the dust raised by the Guru while walking. How much can I dilate upon devotion to the Guru? There is no limit to it.

This detailed talk is due to the outburst of my feeling of devotion to the Guru. He who has a keen desire for devotion does not consider anything more important than service to the Guru. He is verily the home of knowledge of the Self, and because of him this knowledge gains dignity and becomes his devotee regarding him as its deity. In this way knowledge dwells in such a person which is sufficient to satisfy the needs of the whole world and is freely accessible to everyone. (451-455) (Jnanadeva says) I have described this devotion for the Guru at such length, since I have an overwhelming fondness for it. In regard to the service of the Guru, I am armless even though with arms, blind to his devotional songs even though with eyes, more sluggish in his service than a cripple, dumb in describing his glory and a lazy one who has to be fed without any return. But I have intense love for my Master, and so I had to give such an elaborate description of him. Please relish this elaboration and give me an opportunity to serve you; so that I shall give you the correct interpretation of this work (456-460). Hear, O hearers, Lord Vishnu, who bears patiently the burden of world's troubles is talking and Arjuna is listening.

Just as camphor is clear both within and without, so the man of wisdom is pure both internally and externally. Like the jewel which is pure both in and out or like the sun who is equally brilliant both within and without, so he has become externally pure by means of his pious works and internally pure by knowledge. He makes his body pure by washing it with earth and

water and by the recitation of the Vedas (461-465). Just as a mirror can be cleansed of its dust by the intelligent use of a cleansing powder or the stains on linen are removed in; the laundry, so know that his body is washed in .the same way. His interior is also illumined by the lamp of knowledge and purified thereby. Otherwise, O Arjuna, it is ridiculous to keep the: body clean, when the heart is impure. It is like adorning a corpse with ornaments, bathing the donkey in holy waters, or plastering a bitter gourd with jaggery, or decorating a deserted house with an ornamental arch or besmearing food on an empty stomach, or putting the mark of red powder (kumkum) or minimum (shendura) on the forehead of a widow (466-470). Fie upon the tawdry brilliance seen on the gilded hollow dome of a temple., What use can one make of painted fruits which contain only cowdung inside? So it is the case with pious works. A thing of bad quality cannot fetch a higher price. A pitcher filled with wine cannot be made holy by dipping it in the water of the Ganges. So if the mind is pure, external purity follows automatically. Otherwise, how can you find pure knowledge and pure work together? For this reason, O Arjuna, he who has cleansed his exterior by pious works and removed the internal stains by knowledge, becomes purified in and out. Why say more? There remains only purity in him (471-475). Just as a light in a pane of glass is seen to move inside, so his pure thoughts become manifest in the activities of his sense organs. Even if he sees, hears or comes across matters which create doubts, or false notions or yield sprouts of inaction, it produces no effect upon him. Just as the colours of the clouds do not stain the sky, so even if his senses come into contact with their objects. his mind remains uncontaminated with any emotions. Even if he comes across a beautiful lady or a woman of the lower caste, he takes no notice of her and remains indifferent (476-480). When a young woman embraces her husband and son, she has no sexual feeling for the son. His heart is as pure as that and it fully appraises desire and doubt, good and bad actions. Just as a diamond does not get wet by water, or a pebble is not cooked in boiling water. so he does not become tainted by impure thoughts. O Arjuna, this is what is known as purity, and wherever you see it in full. know that knowledge exists in him.

He whose mind has attained steadiness is the very life of knowledge (481-485). Although he carries on outwardly the affairs of the world according to his disposition, his steady mind is not disturbed. Just as when the cow goes to the pasture for grazing, she does not take her love for the calf with her or the chaste wife who immolates herself in the funeral pyre of her husband is not aware of the formalities performed at that time or a greedy man's mind is always on his hoard wherever he goes, so even when his physical activities are going- on, his mind does not swerve from knowledge. Just as the sky does not run with the rushing clouds 'or the Pole star does not move with the other stars, or the road does not walk with the traveller or the trees do not come and go (486-490), so the

movements of the ' body made up of the gross elements do not ruffle his mind. Just as the earth does not totter by the impact of the whirlwind, so his mind does not become depressed by calamities. Want and misery do not vex him nor do fear and sorrow shake him and he does not feel frightened even when death is imminent.

When he is tormented by inordinate hopes. vexations, old age or disease, he does not lose his mental balance. His mind does not vascillate, when he has to face slander, dishonour or punishment or the consequences of intense passion or greed. His mind does not become perturbed even if the sky comes down crashing or the earth gets dissolved in the oceans. Just as an elephant does not retreat when he is attacked with flowers, so he is not perturbed when he is assailed by foul words. Just as the Mandara mountain is not shaken by the waves of the milky sea or the sky is not burnt by the forest conflagration, so his mind does not get upset by the waves of passions, but remains intact till the end of the epoch. O intelligent Arjuna, that which goes by the name of steadiness is nothing but this (496-500). He who is endowed with this firm steadiness is really a store of knowledge.

Just as a serpent does not forget the house of one who has teased it or the warrior his weapon or a greedy person his hoard. or just as the mother cares immensely for her only child, or the bee is greedy for its honey. that man of wisdom. O Arjuna, guards his senses and does not allow them to run after the sense-objects. He is afraid that the goblin in the form of passion would hear about it. or a female spirit would set her eyes on it imperiling his life (501-505). He keeps a watch over his mental states like a sturdy husband who keeps his wanton wife confined at home. He consciously restrains his senses, even at the risk of emaciating his body and keeps guards at the gate of the mind viz. self-control (yama) and sense-restraint (dama). Then fixing the three bandhas, Mula, Udiyana and Jalandhara he concentrates his mind in the sushumna nadi and keeps meditation bound in samadhi Then his mind becomes one with the Self and merges in it (506-510). O Partha, this is what is called self-control and wherever it exists, there dawns knowledge. Know that he is knowledge itself in human form whose command is obeyed by all with great reverence.

8. *Dispassion towards objects of senses, as also absence of self- conceit, and insight into misery and evil of birth, old age, ill-health and death,*

O Partha, dispassion for the sensuous pleasures is ever awake in his mind. Just as no one hankers after vomitted food or goes forward to embrace a dead body or likes to drink poison or enters a burning house or goes to live in the den of a tiger (511-515) or leaps into the red-hot melted iron, or sleeps making the python his pillow, so, O Partha, he does not like

even the mention of sense-objects and does not allow them to come into contact with his sense-organs. He is indifferent to sensuous enjoyments and his body is lean and emaciated. Then he cherishes self-control (shama) and sense-restraint (dama) and is always performing austerities and observing vows. If he has to remain in company of men, he regards it as a calamity encountered at the time of the dissolution of the world. He takes great pleasure in solitude and practice of Yoga and he finds the crowd unbearable. He regards worldly enjoyments like lying on a bed of arrows or rolling in the mire of pus. He considers even the celestial joys like rotted dog's meat. This kind of indifference to the sensuous enjoyment is a characteristic of attainment of knowledge, and it makes a person fit for the bliss of Brahman. Know that knowledge dwells in a person, who loathes worldly and heavenly joys like this. Like a person full of desire. he performs sacrifices and constructs gardens, tanks etc. but does not entertain the pride that he has done them (521-525). He leaves nothing undone in regard to the day-to-day life, but he never harbours the conceit that he has performed a particular action or successfully completed it. Just as the wind blows freely everywhere or the sun gives light without self-conceit or the Vedas preach naturally or the Ganges flows without any motive. so he behaves without any pride. His mental attitude towards work is like that of a tree which is unmindful of bearing fruits (526-530). All self-sense has dropped down from his mind, behaviour and speech, as the pearls drop down when the connecting thread is removed from the necklace. Just as the sky remains unattached to the clouds, so he feels no attachment even while performing actions. Like the drunkard who is unmindful of his clothes, or like the picture which has no use for the weapons in it, or like the bull who knows nothing of the books it carries, he does not remember his very existence in the body. This mental attitude of his is known as freedom from egotism. It is indisputable that knowledge dwells in him who has this attribute in full. (531-535)

Just as the exorcist takes care to ward off possession by an evil, spirit, or the yogi avoids obstacles in the path of Yoga or the mason uses the plummet to ensure that the wall is straight, he remains vigilant even when birth, death, misery, diseases, old age and sins are distant. Just as a serpent retains the memory of its enmity from a previous birth, in the same way he remembers the misery experienced by him in his previous birth and takes steps to avoid future birth. Just as a particle of dust which has gone into the eye or the point of an arrow with which a person is wounded does not get dissolved there, so he does not forget the misery suffered by him in his previous birth. He says to himself, "Alas! I was conceived as the semen entered the pit of polluted blood and came out through the urethra. Then after birth, I licked with relish the sweat on the mother's breast". (536-540) He feels nausea for birth and decides that he will not perform any actions which will result in future birth. Just as a gambler plays with care after losing a bet, or the son takes revenge on his father's enemy, or

a person avenges the death of his elder brother, with the same tenacity he fights against rebirth. Just as an insult rankles in the mind of a respectable person, so the sense of shame of his birth never leaves him. Even though he thinks that his death may not occur for a long time, he remains alert from his very birth (541-545) like an expert swimmer who, coming to know that the river water is deep in the middle, ties a gourd to his waist on the bank itself or like a warrior who prepares himself before going to the battle-field and puts forward his shield to ward off a blow or like a traveller who is cautious that his companion, a polished thief, will not rob him at the next camp or like a patient who rushes for prompt medical help while he is still alive. Otherwise, it is not possible to dig a well, when the house is on fire and extinguish the fire with its water. If, like a stone which falls and sinks in deep waters, he founders in the sea of worldly existence and raises a shout at the time of drowning, no one hears it and so who will tell that he is drowned? (546-550). Just one who has incurred deadly enmity with a powerful foe is ready throughout the day brandishing the sword or just as a betrothed girl prepares herself to leave her mother's home or a monk is indifferent to his household, so he remains indifferent to the world while alive, thinking of the death to come. So in this very life he checks death and wards off rebirth and remains merged in the Self. Thus, the knowledge of one who has got over the pain from birth and death does not diminish.

Similarly even when he is in the prime of, youth, he begins to think of the approaching old age. (551-555). He says to himself, "My body which is hale and hearty today will become later like a sliced vegetable dried in the sun. My hands and feet will stop like the business of an unlucky person. All the strength which I possess so far will be feeble like the power of a king without a prime minister. The nose which smells flowers now will be like the hump of a camel. The condition of my head will be like the swampy ground treaded by cattle-hoofs. My eyes, which at present vie with lotus petals, will go deep and become like a ripe snake-gourd (556-560). The eye-lashes will hang down like the frayed bark of a tree and the chest will be wet with the tears and start rotting. Just as a chameleon rubs the trunk of a gum-arabic tree with saliva, so my mouth will be full of spittle Just as dirty water collects in front of the cooking Are-place with bubbles in it, so the nose will be smeared with mucus. A mass of phlegm will come out of' the mouth which I now colour with betel-roll and show my teeth while smiling , and will which I can make a fine speech, while the molar and other teeth will fall out (561-565). Just as farming suffers due to the burden of debt, or the cattle sitting in the rain do not feel like getting up, so my tongue will gel feeble find become unable to move. Just as bristles are blown away by the wind on the heath so the hair of my beard will drop down. Just as the mountain peaks ooze water in the month of July, so will saliva flow out from the clefts of my teeth. My speech will be incoherent, my ears will not hear distinctly and the condition of my body will be like

that of an old baboon. Just as a scarecrow made of grass swings in the wind, so all my body will quiver in old age (566-570), the legs will totter and old age, destroying the beauty of youth, will make me dance like a marionette. The vents of excreta will be like leaky pots and my neighbours will pray to God for my early death. Seeing my plight, people will spit at me with disgust, my kinsmen will be tired of me and death will not come early. Women will call me a ghoul, children will faint at my sight and people will loathe me. Hearing my dry cough at night my neighbours will say "We do not know how long this old man is going to trouble us" (571-575).

Being forewarned of the old age in youth it self, he will feel disgust for it and say to himself "If I spend my youth in physical pleasures, I will be left with nothing" with which to secure good in old age". Therefore, he hears whatever is worth hearing before he becomes deaf. He goes on pilgrimage so long as his body is under his full control. He sees whatever he wants to see until his sight is intact. He commits to memory memorable sayings before his speech leaves him. He performs acts of charity before his hands are paralysed (576-580). Anticipating that his mind will become demented in old age, he thinks about the knowledge of Self. He feels that it is better to dispose of one's wealth. before it is robbed by a thief, as it is better to keep all things in their proper places before the light is put out. So he takes all proper care that his old age will not. go waste and renounces all things which lead to rebirth. If a traveller, after seeing that the birds have returned to their nests and knowing that the evening has set in, does not take shelter in a fort on the way, he will definitely be robbed. So death will swoop upon him and all his life will have been in vain. Who can anticipate that he will live hundred years? (581-585) If the empty follicles of sesame are thrashed again, they will not yield any sesame. Wills the fire which is reduced to ashes burn again? So if he, anticipating old age in his youth itself, does not come ' under its clutches, know that knowledge dwells in him. Just as a wise man takes proper care of his health before his body becomes a prey to various diseases, or throws away food chewed by a serpent. so he gives up attachment to objects, separation from which gives rise to pain, distress and sorrow, and remains indifferent to the world (586-590). When he sees that the senses will involve him in sinful acts, he closes their doors with stones in the form of self-restraint. Only he, who behaves in this fashion, becomes the master of the wealth of knowledge. Now I shall tell you. O Arjuna, one more unique characteristic of a wise man, please listens.

9. *Non-attachment, non-involvement with son, wife house and the like, and constant. even- mindedness in desired and undesired things*

He is indifferent to his body like a wayfarer who stays in a motel with apathy. He feels even that much attachment for his household, as one would have for the shade of a tree under which he rests on the way (591-

595). As a person is not aware of his shadow, in the same way he is not attracted to his wife. He regards his sons like visitors who stay in his house or like cattle resting under a tree. Although he 'is rolling in wealth, he looks indifferently at it as if he is a passer by. Like a parrot in cage, he lives in the world in fear of the Vedic injunctions. So one who does not feel any attachment to his wife, children and household is the repository of knowledge (596-600), Just as the ocean remains full in the rainy season as well as in summer, so pleasant and unpleasant things do not affect him. Just as the, three periods, morning, noon and evening do not affect the sun, so his mind is not disturbed by pleasure and pain. Know that knowledge dwells in' him, who retains an even temper like the sky

10. *Unflinching devotion to Me, though 'exclusive Yoga, resort to secluded spots and distaste for the company of men,*

    He is fully convinced that there is no, other thing superior to me in this world, He declares by body, speech and mind on oath that there is no other goal in this world than me (601-605). His mind is so enamoured of me that he has become one with me. Just as a wife does not feel any reserve in approaching her husband, so he has dedicated himself to me. Just as, the river Ganges continues to join the sea, so even after he has become one with me, he continues to worship me. The splendour of the sun comes into being with the sunrise and vanishes with sunset. When the water rises on the, surface of the river it is called a ripple, but it is the fact water only (606-610). So he who worships me with dedication and becomes one with me, is himself knowledge incarnate. He prefers to live in holy places, or the banks of a' sacred river, in a fine hermitage or a cave on a mountain or the bank of a lake. He does not like to live in a city, has a liking for solitude and distaste for human habitation. Know that he is knowledge in the human form. O intelligent Arjuna I shall tell you some more characteristics; of a wise person in order to elucidate knowledge' clearly (611- 615).

11. *Constant pursuit of knowledge of Self, and'," insight into the aim of true wisdom all these are known as (the means of) knowledge. Everything else is ignorance.*

    He is firmly convinced that the knowledge through which one experiences the Supreme Self'; is true knowledge and that the knowledge which leads to worldly prosperity and heaven is nothing; but ignorance. He does not long for heaven, neglects his worldly affairs and becomes engrossed in the thoughts about Self. Just as a wayfarer, makes careful enquiries at the crossroads and, avoids the by path, he Axes his mind and intellect on the knowledge of the Self {616-620). Then his intellect becomes steady like the mountain, Meru with the conviction that the knowledge of the Self is the only true knowledge and every other knowledge is delusive. Just as

the pole star remains steady in the sky, he keeps his mind steady on the knowledge of the Self. There is no doubt that knowledge dwells in such a person.

When his knowledge of Self becomes impressed on his mind. he becomes one with me. When a person as just sat down, you cannot say that he is seated, the same is the case with knowledge unless knowledge becomes firmly implanted in his own mind, one cannot call him a man of wisdom). Then he sets his sight on the fruit of that knowledge, which is the Knowable (Brahman) (621-625). If one does not realise the Knowable, then he cannot be said to have attained knowledge. Of what use is a lamp in the hand of a blind man? So if he acquires knowledge but does not realise the knowable, then his knowledge becomes worthless. If the intellect does not reach Brahman in the light of knowledge, then it is blind. He longs to attain that knowledge by which he sees the supreme Brahman everywhere and then he becomes endowed with that spotless knowledge by which he realises Brahman (626-630). The development of his intellect keeps pace. With the development of this knowledge. Then it does not need to be said in so many words that he has become knowledge incarnate. He, whose intellect comes into contact with this knowledge, experiences the touch of God. Is there any wonder if I say that he has become of the very nature of knowledge? Is it necessary to point out the sun as the sun?

Then the hearers said, "Enough of this. It is not necessary to describe this knowledge further. Why do you delay the exposition of the meaning of Gita? You have entertained us by your eloquent discourse and given us full information about knowledge (631-635). You have adopted the poetic style of giving an eloquent description of the subject. Then why, after inviting us, do you disappoint us and cause our opinion to become unfavourable to you? If the lady runs away with the cooked food when people have sat dawn for a meal to be served, of hat avail is, her other polite behaviour to them? Who will feed a cow who is good in other respects but is given to kicking while being milked? We do not know why persons who have n t understood knowledge, go on prattling about it. But you have done us well. That knowledge, a particle of which many persons try very hard to attain by the practice of Yoga etc. is very satisfying and you have also given us a good exposition of it (636-640). Who will complain if the rain falls continuously for seven days? If days of happiness are plentiful, who will become tired of it and keep counting the days on his fingers? If the night of the full moon lasts for an epoch, will the chakora birds be tired of enjoying the moon-light? Who will, therefore, be tired of hearing your eloquent discourse on knowledge? If a lucky guest arrives and the lady of the house happens to be a good cook, both of them will feel that the meal should be prolonged as long as possible. The present occasion is like that. For we are very keen about knowledge, and you also

like to preach about it. (641-645). Our interest in this subject has increased fourfold and we cannot help saying that you are a seer of knowledge. Therefore, please enter the inner recess of your intellect and give us an accurate interpretation of the verses".

Hearing these words of the sages, Jnanadeva, disciple of Nivritti, said, "I also hold the same view. Now that you have commanded me, I would not prolong the talk needlessly". In this way, the Lord explained the eighteen characteristics of knowledge to Arjuna (646-650). Then the Lord said: knowledge should be known by these characteristics. This is also the view of all wise men. I have explained to you this knowledge as clearly as you can see the myrobalan fruit on the palm of your and.

O talented Arjuna, now I shall tell you about what is 'known as ignorance along with its characteristics If a person knows knowledge, he easily knows ignorance also, because that which is not knowledge is ignorance. When the day ends. it is the turn of the night; there is no third course (651-655). But I shall tell some special characteristics of ignorance. If a person lives only for repute, longs for honour and becomes overjoyed if he is treated with respect and out of pride never climbs down from his exalted position like a mountain peak, ignorance dwells in him. Just as some people hang an arch made of strings of grass woven with leaves of holy fig tree or keep a broom tied to a stick erect purposely in the temple for everyone to see, so he announces his acts of piety and shows off his learning, and undertakes all actions to achieve greatness (656-660). He besmears his body with ashes, sandal paste etc. and cheats his followers. Know that such a person is a mine of ignorance. Just as all things, both animate and inanimate, are burnt to ashes in a forest conflagration, the whole world is harassed by his conduct. His normal speech inflicts a deeper wound than a spear and all his plans are more fatal than poison. Ignorance dwells in such a person; in fact, his whole life provides a haven to violence. As the bellows get puffed up when air is pumped in and get empty when air is pumped out, so he becomes elated or despondent according as he is united or separated from his dear ones {661-665).

As the dust caught in a whirlwind rises high in the sky, he becomes thrilled with pr se and miserable if he is slandered. Like mud which becomes moist with a little water and dries up with a light breeze, he becomes affected by honour and dishonour. Ignorance dwells fully in a person who cannot bear such upsurge of feelings. He has a knotty mind, although outwardly his social conduct appears frank. He seems on friendly terms with one but helps another. Just as a hunter feeds animals and birds in order to trap them, so he supports simple-minded persons somehow in order to deceive them and earns the disapprobation of good people (666-670). His actions look outwardly good like a flint covered with moss or a

ripe fruit of a Neem (margosa) tree. Ignorance dwells in such a person without doubt.

He feels ashamed of his preceptor's family, becomes tired of rendering service to him and after receiving instruction from him does not respect him. The mere mention of such a person is like taking food in the house of a pariah. But such a mention of his name became necessary in the course of explaining the characteristics of an ignorant person. Now I shall atone for this sin by taking the name of a devoted disciple. As the name of such a disciple is illuminating like the sun (671-675), it will efface the sin incurred in taking the name of a recalcitrant disciple. The fear arising from uttering the name of a contumacious disciple is removed by taking the name of a good disciple.

Now listen to some more characteristics of ignorance. An ignorant person neglects his work and has a mind full of suspicion. He is impure both ' inside and outside like a foul well in a forest, which is covered with thorny bushes at the top and is full of bones of dead creatures at the bottom. Just as a dog eats food without ascertaining whether it is properly covered or not, so in his greed for wealth, he does not stop to think whether it is rightfully his or belongs to someone else (676-680). As a dog does not consider whether a place is suitable or not for sexual intercourse, in the same way he is not punctilious in his dealings with women. He never feels sorry if he misses the proper time for performing his work or neglects to do his obligatory duties. He is not ashamed of his sinful deeds, nor does he like to perform meritorious deeds. His mind is full of suspicions and he keeps a greedy eye on riches. Such a person is the very image of ignorance.

Just as the grass-seed is displaced with the jerk of an ant, he deflects from his good resolve for a little gain. Just as a puddle becomes dirty with the dipping of a foot in it, he becomes terrified at the thought of imminent danger. The gourd caught in a flood goes where the current takes it, so his mind is carried away in a forceful current of desires. Just as smoke rises to a great distance in the sky along with a strong wind, so his mind becomes agitated on hearing a sad news. Like a dust storm he never remains steady at one place; and he never makes up his mind to stay at a place of pilgrimage or of holy waters, or in a town. Just as an excited chameleon moves up and down the tree (686-690), or a big jar does not remain steady unless it is half-buried in the ground, so the ignorant man keeps on wandering unless he remains stay put in one place. In fickleness he looks like a brother of a monkey. In. such a person ignorance dwells in abundance.

He does not exercise any control over his mind. Just as a flooded brook breaks rough a dyke of sand, he is not afraid of performing prohibited

actions. He breaks his vows in the middle, transgresses his religion and disobeys the rules laid down by the scriptures (691-695). He does not become tired of committing sinful actions, nor has he any liking for good actions and in this he gives up all sense of shame. He turns his back on family tradition, keeps away from the injunctions of the Veda and is unable to decide between proper and improper actions. He is uncontrolled like a bull dedicated to God or like a strong wind or like a flooded canal which has breached its banks. He runs amuck after sensuous 'enjoyments like a blind elephant in a rut or a conflagration on a mountain. What is not thrown in a rubbish-heap? Who can control an unrestrained bull dedicated to God? Who does not cross the threshold of the village gate (696-700)? Just as anyone can take food in a free kitchen or an ordinary person invested with authority exercises it recklessly, or anyone can enter the shop of a merchant, so all kinds of thoughts crowd in his mind. Know that ignorance has increased in such a person.

He does not give up his sensuous desires; whether alive or dead and tries to acquire merit on this earth in order to gain enjoyments in heaven. He toils hard all the time to gain sensual pleasures, prefers optional rites in order to fulfil his desires and if he sees a holy man, he feels defiled and takes a bath with clothes on. Even if the sense-objects turn away from, him, he never tires of them and becomes alert. Just as a leper eats with his rotted hand (701-705), or a male donkey does not let go the female donkey, even if he is kicked by her in the nose. So he leaps into a burning fire (i. e. he is prepared to run any risk) to gain sensuous enjoyment and flaunts his views as if they are his decorations. As a deer runs after a mirage when it suffers agony for a sip of water and does not know that the mirage is not real water but an optical illusion, so he toils from birth to death for the sake of sensuous enjoyments and never getting tired of them, he pursues them with greater love. In his childhood he is madly fond of his parents. When that is over he feels strongly attracted to the person of his wife. (706-710). When old age sets in, while he is enjoying the company of his wife, he transfers his affection to his children. Like a person, blind from birth, he spends all his time in the company of his children, but he never feels tired of sensuous enjoyments till the end of his life. Know that there is no limit to the ignorance of such a person.

Now I shall tell you some more characteristics of such an ignorant person. He performs all his actions in the belief that he consists of only the body and becomes dejected or pleased according as he performs any deficient or efficient action (711-715). He walks erect and stiff in the flush of his youth and learning, just as a devotee (bhagat) starts cooing when the idol is placed on his head. He says to himself, -I am great and rich. Who else is equal to me in conduct and practice? No one is as great as myself. I am all-knowing, adored by the people ", and he swells with pride with a superiority complex. Just as a patient does not relish sweets, he cannot

bear to see anyone prospering. O Partha, a burning lamp consumes the wick and the oil and wherever it is placed, it blackens that place with soot (716-720). It makes a cracking sound, if water is sprinkled over it and is extinguished: with a breeze. If it touches anything, it does not leave even a blade of grass unburnt and, it gives less light and more heat. Like such a lamp, he is a man of bookish learning. Just as milk, given as medicine aggravates the enteric fever, or snake fed with milk vomit poison, so he is envious of virtuous men and full of conceit; for his learning and austerities. He becomes puffed up like a pariah who has become a prince: or like a python who has swallowed a pillar. He never bends like a rolling-pin (721-725). His, heart never melts like a stone and even a good man cannot hold him in check, as snake-charmer cannot cure the bite of an asp. In short, I shall tell you positively that his ignorance is on the increase.

O Arjuna, he does not think of his household, body, wealth and his present birth, An ungrateful; wretch forgets the favours done to him or thief forgets the capital given to him for his business or a shameless person forgets the praise ' offered to him. When a vagrant dog is driven away from the house with its ears and tail cut, it comes back dripping blood (726-730). A toad, swallowed by a snake goes on eating innumerable ' files, without realising its imminent death. In the, same way, he is not distressed by the fact that; he is suffering from a cutaneous disorder brought on by the discharges from the nine gates of his body. He does not realise why he has reached j such a stage. He does not remember how he, seethed nearly for nine months in the womb of his mother full of filth, the affections which he suffered in the womb and the pangs of birth. He does not find it loathsome when ' he sees a child lying in his lap and rolling in its faeces and urine. (731-735). He does not feel distressed by the fact that his present life will come to an end and he will have to be born again.

In the first flush of youth he never starts worrying about his approaching death. He feels so confident that his life will continue in its present state that he does not think that he will have to face death in future. The Ash sticks on to his pond in the fond hope that it will never go dry and does not think of going to a place of deep water. A deer enchanted with music does not see the approaching hunter. The fish swallows the bait without realising that it contains a deadly hook (736-740). The month dazzled by the light of the lamp does not realise that the lamp will burn it. A lazy and foolish person does not, while enjoying sleep, pay any attention, to his house when it is burning or a person swallows food without knowing that it is cooked in poison. In the same way, a person does not realise, while enjoying sensuous pleasures that death has come to him in the guise of life. He considers as real the growth of his body, the passing of day and night and the enjoyment of objects of senses.

But the poor fellow does not realise that a whore surrenders all that is hers to him only to plunder him (741-745), that friendship with a polished thief would spell his death or that to bathe a statue made of clay is to destroy it or the swollen body of a jaundiced person is a sure sign of approaching death. So the ignorant person, being engrossed in eating and sleeping, does not know that he is doomed. A person sentenced to death does know that every step of his towards the stakes brings his death nearer. In the same way as the body grows old, as more days pass, the craving for sense-objects becomes stronger and in the end death overtakes him. Just as salt gets dissolved in water (746-750), his life wastes away and he does not know when the god of death will approach him and take him briskly away. O Arjuna if a person does not realise, being deluded by the sensuous pleasures, that his body is succumbing to death every day, know for certain that he is the king of the country in the form of ignorance.

Just as he does not pay attention to the approaching death in the exuberance of life, so in the flush of youth he is reckless about the approaching old age also. He does not foresee that he will meet the same fate in old age as a cart rolling down a precipice or a boulder released from a mountain peak does not know what is ahead of it (751-755). Just as a stream in the desert place gets flooded or the buffaloes should fight, so he is infatuated with youth. With old age his plump body becomes lean and feeble, his complexion loses its lustre, his neck and head begin to shake, his beard becomes white and his neck becomes slack, but even then he goes on increasing his wealth. Just as a blind person does not see the pillar in front of him until he actually knocks against it or a lazy person becomes very pleased when his eyes become dim (hoping that he will be able to take rest), so, O Arjuna he who does not, in the midst of youthful enjoyments, think about the approaching old age is really and truly ignorant (756-760). If he then happens to see a cripple or a hunchback, he proudly grins and mouths at him. The thought does not occur to him that he is also going to be like that one day. Even if he enters old age which is a forerunner of death, he does not give up the delusions of youth. Know for certain that he is an ignorant person.

Now, I shall tell you some more characteristics of ignorance. A bull which has come back hale and hearty after grazing in the forest inhabited by a tiger, again goes there for grazing without fear. When a person retrieves safely the treasure from the hole of a serpent, he does not believe that a serpent was guarding it (761-765). So even when one or two mishaps occur, a person does not know that there is great risk to life in going on the way he does. He who becomes reckless in the belief that the enmity has come to an end, when in fact his enemy has gone to sleep, he loses his own life and his children also meet the same fate. In the same way, as long as he has good appetite, sleeps well and is in good health, he does not take precautions against any (possible) ailments. The more he

acquires riches while enjoying the company of his wife and children, the more his eyes become dimmed by the smoke screen of his wealth. He does not foresee the misery, which will befall him, when he suddenly loses both his children and riches (766-770). Know, O Arjuna, that such a person is ignorant, as also one who allows his senses to wander freely.

In the flush of youth he truly indulges in sensuous pleasures without any thought as to whether they are fit for enjoyment or not. He does what he ought not to not do, longs for impossible things and ponders over unthinkable thoughts. He enters where he should not enter, he demands things which he should not receive, handles things which he should not touch and does all things which he should not even think about. He goes to places sees spectacles and eats food which ought to avoid and enjoys doing so. (771-775) He keeps company and develop contacts with those he should shun follows the path which he should avoid and hears what he should not hear and talks of things which he should avoid and yet he does not see the evil arising out of such conducts. He performs actions which give pleasure to his body and mind, without caring whether he is doing the right thing or not. He does not pause to think whether in doing so, he should incur sin and suffer agonies in hell. In his company ignorance spreads so fast that it harasses even the wise. (776-780).

I shall tell you some more characteristics by which you will come to know what ignorance is. He fond of his house as a bee is attractive to a sweet smelling lotus. Just as a fly seating on a heap of sugar never thinks of living it. His mind howers around his wife. He remains attached to his house with his heart and soul like a frog which remains in a pond or like a fly which gets stuck in the snot or like an animal which has sunk in the mire. Even after death he becomes a serpent and lives in the open space of the house. He remains firmly attached to his house, like a husband held in a close embrace by his wife. He takes proper care of his house, as a bee exerts itself to gather honey. He is as fond of his house as the parents are fond of their only child born late in their old age. He does not hold anyone dearer than his wife. He is attached to the person of his wife with his heart and soul, utterly unmindful of who he is and what he ought to do. (786-790)

Just as the mind of a great soul becomes merged in the Supreme Self with the stoppage of all his activities, so his senses come under sway of his wife, without caring for public censure. He always curries favour with his wife and dances to her tune like the monkey of a juggler. Just as an avaricious person amasses wealth by himself undergoing hardships and hurting the feelings of his kith and kin, so he gives less in charity. scales down his religious rites, and cheats his relatives, but spares no money for the comfort of his wife (791-795). He worships his deities in a perfunctory manner, beguiles his preceptor with tall talk and gives the excuse of

scanty means to his parents. But he purchases for his wife all creature comforts and all the best things that he sees. He serves his wife with as much attention as a loving devotee worships his deity. He gives to his wife the best and costly presents, but does not provide enough money for the maintenance of his other relatives. He feels as if it is the end of the world, if anybody leers at his wife or misbehaves with her (796-800). Just as people worship the snake with vows to ward off ringworm, he dances to the tune of his wife. In short, his wife is all-in-all to him and loves specially her progeny. He values more than his life all the things which belong to her including her wealth. Such a person is the source of ignorance, which grows in strength nay he is ignorance incarnate.

Like a boat which rocks up and down a stormy sea (801-805), he becomes delighted or despondent according as the situation which he has to face is pleasant or unpleasant. Such a person, who even though intelligent, who feels anxious because of favourable and unfavourable situations, is an ignorant person. He is devoted to me, but he offers worship to me and desires its fruit. Just as one becomes an ascetic to make money or an unchaste woman tries to gain the favour of her husband in order to go to her paramour, he makes a show of his devotion to me, when all the while he is hankering after sensuous enjoyments (806-810). If he dose not gain the desired object, with such worship, he calls his deity false, and gives up its worship Like an unlettered farmer, he installs new deities, but treats them with scant regard like the former deity. He joins that sect, of which the head priest puts up an impressive show end takes his initiation, completely disregarding others.

He treats living beings cruelly, but adores idols made of stone. But he is never exclusively devoted to one deity. He gets prepared an idol of mine and after installing it in one comer of the house, he goes on a pilgrimage to other deities (811-815). He worships me everyday, worships his family deity for success in his undertaking and on special festive occasions, he worships other gods. He installs me in his home, but he makes vows to other gods. He worships his forefathers on their death anniversaries but on the eleventh day of each fortnight of the lunar month he worships me. He worships cobra on the Nagpanchami day and Lord Ganesha on the Ganesha-Chaturthi day. Then on the fourteenth day of the lunar month he worships goddess Durga, saying "O Mother, I am your devotee". He abandons his obligatory duties and on the Navaratra he recites Navachandi in praise of goddess Durga, while on Sundays, he offers hotchpotch food to Bhairoba (an aspect of Lord Shiva) (816-820). Then on Monday, he runs to Lord Shiva in his phallus form to offer his Bel leaves. In this way he worships all gods somehow. Just as a harlot pretends her love to all and sundry he worships all deities without a moment's respite. Know that he who runs after all deities ever now and then is ignorance incarnate.

He who feels dislike for a quiet penance grove, holy places of waters and riverbanks is also full of ignorance. He who likes to stay in an inhabited place, feels pleasure in society and fond of gossiping, he too is an ignorant person (821-825). Being a learned fool, he speaks with derision of the scripture, which leads to the vision of the Supreme. He does ' not even look at the Upanishads has no liking for the science of Yoga and his mind is not attracted towards the knowledge of the Self. He dismantles the protective wall of intellect, which makes him turn to philosophical knowledge and his mind roams at random like stray cattle. He is fully conversant with the Vedic lore which deals with ritual works and observances; he knows by heart all the Puranas and knows astrology so well that all his predictions come true. He is skilled in the arts of sculpture and cooking and he has at his fingered Ups the magic of Atharvaveda (826-830). He knows everything about the science of love, he gives discourses on the epic of Mahabharata and all other lores stand before him with folded hands. He is conversant with the science of ethics, is an expert in the science of medicine and no one can compete with him in his knowledge of poetry and drama. He can hold discussion on the ancient law books (smritis), knows the art of jugglery and has mastery over the Vedic lexicon. He is proficient in grammar and logic, but he is ignorant of the knowledge of the Self. He is regarded, as an authority in respect of all lores except the one relating to the knowledge of the Self-fif upon his knowledge, which is like a child born under the Mula Star (considered inauspicious). Do not pay any attention to it (831-835).

His knowledge is like the eyes spread over the plumage of a peacock, none of which has vision. If one can secure even a small portion of the root of the Sanjivani plant which restores the dead to life, of what use are the cartloads of other medicinal herbs? It is simply mockery to have auspicious marks on the palms without long life, to bedeck a headless body with ornaments or to start a marriage procession without the bride and the bridegroom. In that way. O Partha, all other lores with the exception of the one relating to the knowledge of the Self lack authority. So O Arjuna, bear in mind that the body of the learned fool who has not attained the true knowledge of the Self (836-840). has grown from the seed of ignorance and his learning is the plant of ignorance. What he talks is the flower of ignorance, and the virtuous deeds which he performs are the fruit of ignorance. Does it need to be said that one who has scant regard for spiritual knowledge is incapable of understanding its import? How can he who returns without reaching the shore on this side know anything of the other shore? How can he whose head is caught in a niche at the very threshold see what is inside the house (841-845)? He who has not even a nodding acquaintance with the knowledge of the Self cannot know the true import of that knowledge. It is not necessary to demonstrate to you mathematically that such a person does not understand the real essence of knowledge.

If you feed a pregnant woman, you automatically feed the child in the womb. In the same way, the characteristics of knowledge which you were told before imply characteristics of ignorance which are exactly their opposite. When a blind man is invited to a meal, it includes an invitation to his guide. So when the characteristics of knowledge were described, it was not necessary to state separately the qualities of ignorance. But I have mentioned again the characteristics of ignorance as the opposites of the distinguishing marks of knowledge such as absence of pride etc. (846-850). Ignorance appears in its true form when the eighteen characteristics of knowledge are stated negatively. In the fourth quarter of the last stanza Lord Krishna had said, "These are the characteristics of knowledge, and their opposites constitute ignorance." Following this dictum I have explained in detail the characteristics of ignorance. Otherwise, is there any sense in increasing the volume of milk by adding water to it? I have only tried to amplify the meaning conveyed in the original verse without being prolix and without transgressing its original sense. Then the hearers said "O, you inspirer of the poets, there is nothing objectionable in your discourse. Why do you worry unnecessarily (851-855). You have been told by the Lord to divulge the secret meaning of his talk. If we say that you have clarified his meaning admirably, it will only overwhelm you. Therefore we would not say it; but this much we say that we have thoroughly enjoyed this ride in the boat of knowledge hearing your discourse. Now tell us promptly what the Lord said further."

Hearing these words of the holy men, Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivritti said, "Hear now what the Lord said" (855-860). He said, "O Arjuna, the characteristics which you have heard now are of ignorance. You should now turn your back on this ignorance and fix your mind firmly on knowledge. Then you will attain to the Knowable (the Supreme) through that spotless knowledge". Hearing this, Arjuna longed to know it and divining this wish of Arjuna the omniscient Lord said: I shall tell you now that what Knowable is.

12. *I shall now declare to you the Knowable, by knowing which one enjoys immortality. It is the beginingless Supreme Brahrnan, which is said to be neither existent nor non-existent.*

The Supreme is called Jneya, as it is not knowable by any other means than knowledge (861-865) and as after knowing it, nothing remains to be known. With the attainment of this knowledge, a person becomes one with the Supreme and after renouncing the world, remains absorbed in eternal bliss. That Knowable has no beginning and no end and so is known as the Supreme. If you say that it is non-existent, it becomes manifest in the form of the universe and if you say that the universe is the Supreme Self, it is only his Maya. It has no form, colour or shape. It is not seen nor does it see, so who can say that it exists and how (866-870)? Well, if you say that

it does not really exist, then how did the Great Principle (mahat) and the other evolutes come into being? Since no one could definitely say that it is or it is not speech becomes dumb and the power of thinking too comes to a dead halt. Just as clay appears in the form of a large earthen vessel, a pitcher and a dish, so the Supreme has become the universe and has completely pervaded it.

13. *With hands and feet stretching everywhere, with eyes, mouths and heads facing all sides, with ears hearing everything in the world, it remains pervading all.*

    The Knowable is at all places and times and is not separate from them. So whatever actions are carried on by gross and small beings are its hands. It is for this reason that the Brahman is said to be having hands everywhere, because it gets all actions performed everywhere in all forms (871-875). Since it abides at all times and at all places, it is named 'having feet everywhere'. The sun does not have different organs such as eyes and as it is the seer of all forms, it is cleverly called by the Vedas as 'having eyes everywhere'. Since it rules over the heads of all beings in its eternal form, it is said to be 'having heads everywhere'. O Partha, the Fire constitutes its mouth, through which it enjoys all things (876-880) and for this reason the Vedas call Brahman 'having faces everywhere'. As the akasha pervades all things, so its ears pervade all words and so we call it having organs of hearing everywhere. Because of its omnipresence we have described it in this way otherwise how can one speak of it which is devoid of all forms as having hands, feet and eyes (881-885)? When a wave rises in the sea, and swallows another small wave, is the swallowing wave different from the swallowed wave (both being water)? In the same way as Brahman is the same everywhere, how can it possess dualism as the pervader and the pervaded. But in order to explain what it is, K became necessary to adopt the notion of dualism. Just as a small dot is used to denote 'zero', the language of duality has to be used in expounding unity in words. Otherwise, O Arjuna, the institution like the preceptor and disciple (in which instruction is imparted by one to another) will cease to exist, and all talk about unity will come to an end. It is for this reason that Vedas have adopted the language of dualism to expound the truth of monism (886-890). Now hear how the Brahman abides pervading all forms that we perceive.

14. *Although devoid of all senses, it seems to possess their qualities. It is unattached and yet supports all. Though beyond the qualities, it experiences them.*

    O Arjuna, that Brahman is like this. Just as the sky pervades all space, or yarn assumes the form of cloth. liquidity assumes the form of water, or light assumes the form of lamp, as the fragrance of camphor remains in

the form of camphor, or action remains in the form of the body or gold remains in the form of a granule, so this Brahman pervades all things (891-895). But when the gold is in the form of a granule, it remains gold. O Arjuna, even when the current of water is crooked and runs in a zigzag way, the water flows straight and always gives pleasure. When the iron becomes red-hot by heat, does it cease to be iron? The sky enclosed in a round pot appears round, but it looks quadrangular in the quadrangular space of a hermitage; but the sky is neither round nor quadrangular. So Brahman does not become modified by its apparent modifications. It appears as if Brahman has become modified into mind, senses, etc. and the three qualities (gunas) (896-900). But just as the sweetness does not reside in the lump of jaggery, but in jaggery itself, so the senses and the qualities do not constitute Brahman. O Arjuna, clarified butter exists in milk in milkform, and yet milk is certainly not the clarified butter. So Brahman pervades senses and qualities, but the latter do not constitute Brahman, just as although gold takes different forms as ornaments, it remains as pure gold in any form.

Plainly speaking, Brahman is entirely distinct from the senses and qualities. All distinctions such as name, colour, relation. species and action etc. are all attributes of form and do not apply to Brahman (901-905). The Brahman is neither the qualities nor is connected with them in any way, but the latter appear to be so connected. It is because of this that the ignorant ascribe these qualities to Brahman. But to conceive qualities in Brahman is to attribute clouds to the sky or the reflection in the mirror to the mirror or to think of sun's reflection in water as the sun or of mirage as existing in the sun's ray. In the same way the notion that Brahman supports the universe without contact is due to delusion and so is of no value (906-910). Just as when a pauper becomes a prince in a dream it is .all unreal, so to say that the Brahman devoid of qualities experiences qualities is all due to delusion. It is for this reason one cannot say that the Brahman is associated with qualities or experiences them.

15. *It is within and without all beings, whether stationary or moving. It is hard to conceive due to its subtleness. It is far away and also nearby.*

O son of Pandu, Brahman abides in all created beings, whether moving or stationary. It is one, just as heat is the same in the sparks of Are, though they are of different forms. That which is Imperishable and remains pervading the universe in a subtle form is the Knowable. It is within the body and without it, it is near as also far, it is one without a second (910-915). It is not the case that the milky sea is sweeter in the middle and less sweet near its shores. In the same way, it pervades all things equally. It remains completely pervading the various orders of beings such as the insect class. O Arjuna, best of all hearers, the moon reflected in different pots filled with water appears different, but in reality it is one. Even if the

heaps of salt are different, their saltiness is the same. In all sugarcanes the sweetness is the same.

16. *Though undistributed among beings, it stands as if distributed. The Knowable is the sustainer of all beings, as also (their) devourer and creator.*

    In the same way, the Knowable is pervading all the beings singly and is also the first cause of the universe (916-920). Just as the sea is the support of its waves, so the Brahman is the support of all beings and forms. It, therefore, supports all beings as the body supports childhood, youth and old age. It remains the same without a break in all the stages of creation, just as the sky remains unaltered at any time of the day, whether it is morning, noon or evening. O dear friend, when the Supreme Brahman creates the universe it is known as god Brahma, when it maintains it, it is called Lord Vishnu and when it destroys it, it is known as Lord Shiva. When all the three qualities disappear, we call it the void (akasha) (921-925) and that which destroys the three qualities and swallows the void of akasha, is the formless Brahman, which is accepted by the Vedas.

17. *It is the light even of Lights; It is said to be beyond darkness. It is knowledge, the Knowable and attainable by knowledge. It abides in the hearts of all.*

    That Knowable kindles the fire, provides nectar to the moon and gives vision to the sun to oversee the affairs of the world. By its light the starry sky is illumined, and the sun moves at pleasure in the universe. It is the origin of the origin, the expanse of the expansion, the intelligence of the intellect and the life of the living. It is the mind of the mind, eyes of the eyes, ears of the ears, the faculty of speech of the tongue (926-930). It is the life-breath of the life-breath, the feet of the movement and that which activates the actions. O son of Pandu, it is that which gives form to the form, enables the expansion to expand and the destruction to destroy. It is the primal principle of the earth, and is the water of water, and it is that by which the splendour is illuminated. It is the very breath of wind, the interspace of the sky and in short that by which all things become existent. O Arjuna, so this Knowable is the first cause of the universe and does not admit of duality (931-935). With its vision, the seer and the object of seeing merge in each other and become one. It is the knowledge the knower and the knowable and it is also the goal to be attained through knowledge. When the balance sheet is prepared after tallying all the books of accounts, the latter have served their purpose. So with the attainment of Brahman, the goal and the means of attaining it are united. This Brahman has no connection whatsoever with duality and abides in the hearts of all.

18. *Thus the field, the knowledge and the knowable have been described in brief. My devotee knowing this becomes fit to attain My being.*

    In this way, O my friend, I have given you a clear exposition of the Field (936-940). Then I explained to you the essential nature of knowledge in such a way that you can easily comprehend it. Thereafter I described to you admirably the characteristics of ignorance until you were thoroughly satisfied and said "Enough of it". Now I have expounded to you the knowable after adducing cogent reasons. O Arjuna, after considering all these matters and longing for union with me, my devotees come to me. After renouncing the body and other paraphernalia, they fix their minds on me (941-945). O Arjuna, such devotees of mine after attaining my knowledge and after surrendering their individuality to me, become one with me. In this way, I have devised the easiest way to attain union with me, in the same way as one constructs or climbs a precipice after constructing steps, reaches a higher point by raising scaffolding or crosses a deep river in a boat. O great warrior, if I had told you simply that there is only the Supreme Self, it would not have carried conviction to you. But knowing the limitations of your intellect, I had to explain it to you in its four different aspects (946-950). One has to split a morsel into twenty parts to feed a child; so I had to explain to you in its four aspects. After judging your mental capacity, I explained Brahman to you in its four aspects, namely the Field, knowledge, the Knowable and Ignorance. If, even after all this effort, your mind is not able to comprehend it, I shall explain it to you in a different way.

    Now instead of describing it to you in its four aspects or treating it as single aspect, I shall explain it to you in two parts as Self (purusha) and not-Self (prakriti). But you do one thing, give me your sole attention and listen to what I say (951-955). Hearing these words of the Lord. Partha was thrilled. Then the Lord said, "Do not get so excited". Seeing him in that excited state, the Lord also was overwhelmed, but restraining himself somehow, said, O Arjuna, I shall explain to you Brahman in its two aspects, the purasha and the prakriti The Yogins call this the Sankhya doctrine. I incarnated myself as sage Kapila to expound it. Now listen to the flawless discourse on the discrimination between prakriti and purusha, so said Lord Krishna, the Primeval Person.

19. *Know that prakriti and purusha are both without beginning, and know that the qualities and modifications are born of prakriti.*

    The purusha, the Self, is without beginning and the prakriti, the riot-Self is co-existent with him; and they are like day and night (956-960). The shadow has no form, but co-exists with form. In the same way, O Dhananjaya, an ear of corn contains both the grain and the husk. So the prakriti and purusha are a famous pair existing from the very beginning.

Thus prakriti and purusha are the same as the Held and, the knower of the Held, about whom I spoke to you before. Even if their names are different, the subject is the same: so bear always this in your mind (961-965). O son of Pandu that which is existent is the purusha and the prakriti is the source of activity. Intellect, senses and the mind, which give rise to modifications; and the three qualities, sattva, rajas, and tamas are all products of the prakriti which is the source of activlty.

20. *In the case of effect cause and agency, prakriti is said to be the cause. Of the experience of pleasure and pain, purusha is said to be the cause.*

    Desire and intelligence (residing in the prakriti) produce first egoism and then lead the embodied self to the act of willing. The means which have to be employed to gain an object is known, O Dhananjaya, as action (966-970). When the desire grows strong, it activates the mind and sets the senses to work. This is the agency of the prakriti. So this prakriti is the source of effect, cause and agency, so said the Lord, the prince among the Siddhas. Through this triad, prakriti gets into activity, but it acts according to the dominant quality. The action in which the sattva quality is predominant is ordinary or mised and that which arises from a domanant tamas quality is irreligious and prohibited. In this way good and bad actions arise from prakriti, resulting in pleasure and pain. Bad actions cause pain and good actions conduct to pleasure. The pleasure and pain feld by the purusha constitutes his experience. The prakriti continues its activity as long as it gives rise to pleasure and pain and the purusha has to experience it. The prakriti and purusha manage their affairs in a very peculiear manner, in that what the prakriti earns, the purusha enjoys it without doing anything. It is really a wonder how the prakriti gives birth to universe without mating with her spouse.

21. *For purusha, dwelling in prakriti, experiences the qualities born of prakriti; his attachment to the qualities is the cause of his birth in good on evil wombs.*

    He (the self) is bodyless and crippled, indigent and single and the oldest of the old. He is known as purusha, but one cannot say whether he is male, female or neuter. He does not have eyes and ears nor hands and feet nor form and he does not have a name or any organs. He is the spouse of prakriti and has to experience pleasure and pain. Although he is inactive, indifferent and a non-enjoyed, prakriti, his faithful consort, makes him experience sensuous pleasures {981-985). The prakriti sports with him wonderfully by cajoling him with her beauty and qualities. As she consists of qualities, she is known as gunamayi; nay she is the quality incarnate. She assumes new forms, changing every moment and her energy energises even the inert things. She gives publicity to names, makes love lovable and makes the sense organs sensible. Although the

mind is neuter, she makes it roam all over the world- such is her extraordinary feat (986-990). She is an isle of enchantment, an all-pervasive presence which gives rise to emotions galore. This prakriti is the bower of creepers in the form of desires and the spring in the woods of infatuation and is well known by the name of divine Maya. It is she who expands the scope of 1iterature, gives name and form to the formless, and she carries on the raids of worldly existence. She is the source of all arts and lores, of desires and passions and of knowledge and activity. She is the mint of sonorous sound and the home of miracles, in fact the panorama of the world is her divine play (991-995). The creation and dissolution of the world are her morning and evening sports. In this way she is a wonderful enchantress. She is the mate of lonely purusha, the companion of the unattached Self and she herself stays happily in the void i.e. the Brahman. Such is the sweep of her happy wife hood that she can control the uncontrollable purusha. In reality the purusha has no limitation (*upadhi*) right from the beginning; yet prakriti herself becomes all that pertains to him. Prakriti herself is the origin of the embodiment of the Self-existent and she gives form, continuance and habitation to the formless (996-1000). She becomes the desire of the desireless, the contentment of the complete, and the race and kin of the raceless (and kinless). She becomes the sign of the indescribable, the measure of the measureless and the mind and the intellect of the mindless. She herself becomes the form of the formless, the activity of the actionless and the egoism of the egoless. She becomes the name of the nameless, the birth of the birthless and the action of the actionless. She becomes the quality of the quality's, the feet of the footless, the ears of the earless, the eyes of the eyeless (1001-1005), feelings of the feelingless, the limbs of the limbless-in fact she, becomes all the limiting attributes of the purusha. In this way, the prakriti makes the changeless purusha of changeful nature. Just as the lustre of 'the moon vanishes on the new moon day, such becomes the state of the purusha because of prakriti Just as gold has less purity when mixed with alloy, or a pious man becomes crazy when possessed by a ghost, a bright day becomes a bad day (1006-1010) when clouds gather in the sky, so the purusha loses his splendour when he comes under the sway of prakriti He is then like milk in the udder, like Are in the firewood like the brilliance of a jewel covered with linen, like a king under subjection to another, or like an ailing lion. Just as a man wide awake is overpowered by sleep and experiences pleasure and pain in a dream, so when the purusha identifies himself with the prakriti, he has to experience the qualities. Just as when a person indifferent to the world comes under the influence of a woman, he becomes entangled in worldly affairs, so the birthless and eternal purusha, when he identifies himself with the prakriti becomes associated with her qualities and suffers the pangs of births and deaths (1011-1015). O Arjuna, if you ask me how this happens, ft is like this. When red-hot iron is struck with a hammer, it is said that the strokes of hammer are suffered by fire. When people see the many reflections of

the moon in moving water, they ascribe this plurality to the moon. When one looks into a mirror, he sees two faces (his own and his reflection in the mirror). When a crystal is placed on red powder (Kumkuma), it looks reddish. In the same way it appears that the birthless purusha takes birth, but it is certainly not true. Just as a monk dreams that he is born in the low caste, so the purusha thinks that he has taken birth in a good or bad womb (but it is really not so) (l016-1020). So the purusha does not experience the vicissitudes of life, but feels like that due to his association with the qualities.

22. *The great Lord is the witness, the consenter, sustainer and enjoyed. This supreme person in the body is also styled as the Supreme Self.*

    Just as the jasmine creeper needs the support of a pole, so the prakriti requires the support of the purusha. But they are poles apart like the earth and the sky. O Arjuna, this purusha stands Arm and immovable like the Meru mountain on the bank of the river in the form of prakriti and casts his reflection in it, but he does not drift in the current. Even though the prakriti appears and vanishes, he remains eternal.

    He is the ruler of all created beings right from god Brahma, and prakriti exists because of him, creates the world under his authority and so is his consort (1021-1025). O Arjuna, this universe which exists as her creation from time immemorial becomes dissolved in him at the end of the epoch. He is the Lord of the prakriti also known as mahadbrahman and is the controller of the universe. It is he, who with his pervasive power measures the worldly affairs. He is what is designated as the Supreme Self in the body. O son of Pandu, when people talk of one and only one purusha beyond the prakriti, he is that purusha.

23. *He who knows the purusha and the prakriti with its qualities, in whatever condition he may be, is not born again.*

    He who knows that this purusha is one and that all the actions of the qualities belong to the prakriti (1026-1030), and is convinced that they are like form and its shadow or water and mirage, he knows how to discriminate between the two. Although he is physically performing works, he is not tainted by them, just as the sky does not get defiled by the dust rising high. He who is not infatuated with his body when it exists, does not have rebirth after it falls. Thus in this marvellous way, the discriminating knowledge between the prakriti and purusha conduces to his spiritual benefit (1031-1035). Now, I shall tell you the various means by which this discrimination will dawn in your mind.

24. *Some see, through meditation, this Self in themselves by the self (mind); others by the Yoga of knowledge and still others by the Yoga of action.*

O best among the warriors some burn in the crucible of reason the impure gold and by removing the alloy of impure thoughts through hearing, study, reflection and meditation, purify the gold in the form of Self. They determine the pure Self by the elimination of the impure thirty six principles which are entirely different from the Self and then see the Self in their own heart through the vision of meditation. Others, through good luck, meditate upon him through the yoga of knowledge or the yoga of action (1036-1040).

25. *Then there are those, who though ignorant of this, hear from others and worship; they too overcome death, adhering to what they have heard.*

    And in such ways they cross the ocean of worldly existence. But there are others, who giving up all conceit place their faith in the words of the Guru. They hear with great attention and reverence the words of such a person, who knows what is good or bad for them, who removes their misery with solicitude and after enquiry makes them happy. They surrender to him their very body and mind, set aside their other work to hear his words and wave their very lives on his advice (1041-1045). In this way, O Arjuna, they cross safely the ocean of worldly existence. Thus there are many ways of realising the Supreme Brahman. I shall now give you the quintessence of all these ways obtained by churning the scriptures. This will enable you to attain the spiritual nature of Brahman and become one with it without much effort. I shall now tell you the supreme pure Truth by eschewing all dissenting views with the aid of intelligence (1046-1050).

26. *Whatever being is born, whether moving or stationery, know, O best of Bharatas, that is due to the union between the Field and the knower of the Field.*

    This whole universe springs from the union of the knower of the Field and the Field, which I have already taught you. Just as waves are produced when water comes into contact with the wind, or mirage appears on the barren plains heated by the sun's rays or sprouts come forth when the earth receives showers of rain, so know that this union produces every thing, whether moving or stationary, and which is called the living organism (1051-1055). For this reason, O Arjuna, all things and beings are not different from this Self and primal matter.

27. *He who sees in all beings the Supreme Lord equally present, not perishing when they perish, he sees truly.*

    The fabric is not yarn, but it is made up of yarn. In this manner, you realise this unity by your inner vision. All these beings emanate from one source (i.e. the Supreme Self) and you should get experience of it. Their names are different, their conduct too is different and they dress differently. If

after seeing these different forms, you entertain the notion of their distinctness, you will not attain release from this worldly existence for umpteen years (1056-1060). Just as the gourd creeper bears gourds of different shapes, some long, some crooked and some round to serve different uses, or the jujube tree is the same whether its branches are straight or crooked, so all beings of whatever form spring from a uniform source, the Supreme Self. Just as sparks of fire of different forms have the same heat, so the Supreme Self which abides at the core of manifold beings is one and the same. O warrior. although rain falls in showers from all parts of the sky, it contains the same water, in the same way, although the beings are of different forms and shapes; the Self which abides in them is the same. Although the earthen jars or the hermitages are of different shapes, they contain the same space. In the same way one and the same Self abides in beings of different forms (1061-1065). Just as gold out of which ornaments such as armlets are fashioned has the same purity, so this illusory aggregate of beings perishes, but their indwelling Self is imperishable. In this way, he who knows that the indwelling Self does not possess the attributes of a being and yet is not distinct from it is a seer among all wise men. Such a one is the very eye of knowledge, a man with a vision. O great warrior, this is not a formal praise: such a person is fortune's favourite.

28. *Seeing indeed everywhere the same Lord equally present, he does not debase his self and so attains the highest goal.*

This body, consisting of the three humorous (phlegm, wind and bile) is made up of the Ave gross elements. It is a terrific bag of qualities and senses. It is like a scorpion with Ave stinging tails and it is beset with Ave kinds of fires. The Self is confined in the body like a lion caught in a snare (1066-1070). Notwithstanding this, why does not one pierce his dagger of knowledge of the eternal Self into the bowels of the body (i.e. destroy body-consciousness). Only an enlightened person, O Arjuna, though dwelling in a body, never harms himself and attains to the abode of the Supreme Self. To attain to that Brahman, Yogis cross numerous births through the practice of Yoga and get rid of the consciousness of their bodies. All the goals including liberation come to rest in that Supreme Self, which is beyond the universe of name and form, which is on the other side of sound, and which is in the inner chamber of the samadhi state, in the same way as the river Ganges and other rivers merge into the sea (1071-1075). He, who does not see any distinction among beings, though of different forms, comes to experience the bliss of the Supreme Self in this very body. Though lamps are of different shapes, they give the same light. In the same way, he who sees the Supreme Self from the beginning as all-pervasive with an even mind, does not get into the clutches of death. So I off and on praise such a fortune's favourite, who has settled down in life with an evenness of mind.

29. *He who sees that by prakriti alone are actions performed in various ways and that the Self is not the agent, he sees truly.*

    He knows fully well that the prakriti performs all actions through the agency of the mind, intellect senses and the organs of action (1076-1080). The occupants of a house move about in the house which does nothing. Similarly, although clouds move in the sky, the sky remains still. In the same way, the prakriti play-acts in the light of the Self, who remains steady like a pole. The Yogi, however, has the conviction in the light of knowledge that the Self is not the agent.

30. *When he perceives the diversity of beings as rooted in the One (Brahman), and as spreading from that One alone, then he becomes Brahman.*

    O Arjuna, he who perceives that the beings of different forms are not distinct, knows that he has attained Brahman. Just as there are ripples in water, particles of dust in the earth, rays in the sun's disc (1081-1085), or organs in the body, feelings in the mind and sparks in the Are, in the same way all beings have their origin in one and the same Self. When he is fully convinced about this, then one can say that the ship containing the wealth in the form of the Supreme Brahman comes into his possession. Then wherever he casts his glance, he discovers that all that is pervaded by Brahman; in fact, he enjoys supreme bliss, In this way one should be able to attain full experience of the relation between prakriti and purusha. This achievement of yours is as important as the acquisition of sip of- nectar or the sight of a treasure (1086-1090). But O spouse of Subhadra, please do not make up your mind yet on the basis of the experience. For I am going to tell you a couple of my thoughts; so lend your ears to me and try to understand these thoughts of mine. Saying so, the Lord began his speech, which Arjuna heard with rapt attention.

31. *Being beginingless and devoid of qualities, this immutable Supreme Self although existing in the body, O Arjuna, does not act nor is it attached.*

    Just as the sun reflected in the water remains dry, so the Supreme Self exists in the body in his pure form. O Arjuna, the sun remains the same before and after reflection, but to others he appears reflected in the water (1091-1095). In the same way, it is not true to say that the Self exists in the body; he remains where he was earlier. Just as when one looks into the mirror he sees his face reflected in it, so it is said that the Self exists in the body. To say that the Self is united with the body is meaningless. Can you imagine the wind and the sand meeting together? How could Are and cotton be woven together in a thread? How can the sky and the cliff be joined together? If a person starts going east and another going West from the same place, they cannot meet. The relation between the Self and the

body is like that (1096-1100). Know that there is no relation between them whatsoever, as between light and darkness or between a dead and a living person or between night and day or between gold and cotton. The body is fashioned from the Ave gross elements and it is woven in the thread of action and revolves on the wheel of births and deaths. The body is like a lump of butter thrown into the mouth of the Are in the form of Death-god, where it disappears in the short time taken by a fly to flap its wings. If it falls into the Are, it is reduced to ashes, and if it falls into the clutches of a dog it is turned into dung (1101-1105). If it escapes from both these fates, it becomes the prey of germs and insects, and in fact, it meets with a repulsive end. But the Self is eternal, self-existent and without beginning. As he is devoid of qualities, he is neither possessed of parts nor partless. He is neither active nor inactive, neither fat nor lean. He is neither active nor inactive, neither fat nor lean. Since he is formless, he is neither visible nor invisible, neither luminous nor non-luminous; neither minute nor extensive. As he is without attributes (void), he is neither empty nor full. He is neither bereft nor possessed of anything, he has neither form nor is he formless (1106-1110). As he is the Self, he is neither joyous nor joyless, neither one nor many, neither bound nor liberated. As he is without a mark, he is neither this much nor that much, neither self-made nor made by another, neither talkative nor dumb. He is neither created along with the universe nor is he dissolved at the end of the world, being himself the ground of existence and non-existence. As he is immutable, he cannot be measured or described, he neither increases nor decreases neither fades nor dies. O dear, this is the real nature of the Self. To say that he dwells in the body is like talking of the sky as being limited by the quadrangle of a hermitage (1111-1115). Since he is all-pervasive and uniform, he does not assume or give up the form of the body, but remains self-existent. Just as nights and days come and go, so the bodies come and go in regard to the Self. So even while abiding in the body, he neither does anything nor gets anything done by others, nor is he occupied with any physical actions. In, this way, he does not undergo any change, either of diminution or increase in his aspect, and so while dwelling in the body he remains unaffected.

32. *As the all-pervading space is not affected because of its subtleness, even so the Self is not affected, though present everywhere in the body.*

    O Arjuna, is there any place where space does not exist or where it does not enter? Even so it does not become defiled. (1116-1120). In the same way, although the Self dwells in the body, he does not become polluted by the body. Always bear in mind that the self is distinct from the body.

33. *Even as the one sun illumines the entire world, so the Lord of the Field illumines the whole Field, O Bharata.*

When the magnet moves the iron by its mere proximity, the iron does not become the magnet. Similar is the relation between the body and the Self. All the domestic affairs are carried on in lamp-light: but there is a great difference between the house and the lamp. O Arjuna, there exists Are in a latent form in wood; but the wood is not fire. The Self should also be viewed in this manner (i.e. as different from the body) (1121-1125). Just as there is a great difference between the sky and the clouds or between the sun and the mirage, it is so in the case of the Self and the body. Just as the sun illuminates singly the entire world, so the knower of the field illumines all the Fields. Do not have any doubt about it.

34. *Those who know with the eye of wisdom, the difference between the field and the knower of the field thus, and also the (means of) release from the prakriti of elements, attain to the Supreme.*

O you Arjuna, who grasps the meanings of words, that intellect which realises the distinction between the Field and the knower of the field. sees truly and grasps the meaning of worlds. In order to realise this distinction between the two, the spiritual aspirants wear away the thresholds of the men of wisdom (1126-1130). It is for this that learned men amass the wealth of tranquillity and study the scriptures. Some undertake the yogic discipline and move heaven and earth with the hope of knowing him. Some hold in contempt their bodies and other possessions and render devout service at the feet of the saints (literally. carry their wooden slippers on their heads). By employing such various ways, they become free from sorrow. And some attain to the discriminating knowledge between the Held and the knower of the Field which I value more than my own knowledge (1131-1135). They know the real nature of the illusory prakriti which decks herself in different forms such as the gross elements and seems to affect the embodied Selves according to the maxim of the parrot and the tube (in which the parrot who, although in no way bound to the tube, imagines through fright that he is bound to it and clings to it frantically). Just as one knows the real nature of a flower wreath when the delusive knowledge of its being a serpent disappears or one recognises the shell when the delusive knowledge of its being silver vanishes, in the same way those who know the prakriti as distinct from the purusha, attain to Supreme Brahman (1136-1140). They become, O Partha, that Supreme Truth, which is more pervasive than the sky, which is beyond the prakriti, which, when attained, leaves no room for such feelings as identity or distinction and which remains in the non-dual form with the elimination of form, individuality and duality. Such persons know the difference between the prakriti and purusha and in this respect are like swans (which separate milk from water).

Shri Jnanadeva says, in this way did the Lord unravel the mysterious doctrine of prakriti and purusha to his bosom friend Arjuna. The Lord imparted this knowledge to him, as one pours water from one jar into another (1141-1145). But who imparted it to whom, since they are both Nara and Narayana? Lord Krishna himself said that he is Arjuna (X-37). But why should I say this without being

asked? In short, the Lord gave to Arjuna his all. Yet the mind of Partha was not satisfied, he longed to hear more and more the Lord's talk. Just as the lamp flares up with the addition of oil, his longing to hear the Lord became intense. When the hostess is expert in cooking and liberal in serving food and the guest is fond of good food, the hands of both remain busy in serving and eating to their full satisfaction (1146-1150); so it was in the case of the Lord and Arjuna. Seeing Arjuna's intense longing to hear more and more, the Lord was greatly thrilled and encouraged to prolong his discourse. Just as with favourable wind the clouds gather and pour rain or with the rising of the full moon the sea gets into full tide, the speaker's eloquence waxes with the - response of the audience.

O King, now listen to the elocution of the Lord, which will make the whole world full of joy. This dialogue between the Lord Krishna and Arjuna, which has been narrated by sage Vyasa with his unlimited talent in the Bhishmaparva of Mahabharata, I shall now render in beautiful ovi verse in the local language (115l-1155). I shall now narrate the tale full of the serene sentiment, which will surpass even the erotic sentiment. I shall use such beautiful diction that it will redound to the credit of literature and even make nectar insipid in sweetness. My soft cooling phrases will even surpass the moon (who makes the moonstone ooze) arid by their captivating eloquence will muffle the divine resonant sound. If persons with a demoniacal bent of mind were to hear them, they will be filed with sattvic sentiments and those with a divine bent of mind will enter into samadhi Dallying with speech, I shall All the world with the import of Gita and make the whole world a pleasure-ground (1156-1160). May the poverty of discreet thought vanish, may the ears and the mind attain fulfillment, and wherever one sees. May one see the mine of the Brahmic lore. May the supreme Truth come within the vision of everyone, may the happy festive occasions come within the reach of all and may the knowledge of the Self become plentiful in the world. I shall now give such a fine discourse that it will bring about all that I have said, for I have come under the wing or my Guru shri Nivrittinatha. I shall explain every word in the text clearly, employing poetical language and similes in rich profusion. My magnanimous preceptor has made me proficient in all the lores (1161-1165) and it 1s because of his grace that whatever I say receives your approbation. Any capability that I possess to explain the meaning of Gita to an audience like this is entirely due to his favour. Now that I have taken refuge at your feet, there is no obstruction in my way. O Masters, is it ever possible that the goddess of speech will have a dumb child? It is also not possible that goddess Lakshmi will lack auspicious signs on her palm. How then can it ever happen that a person who has taken refuge with you remain ignorant? I shall now sprinkle all the nine sentiments (rasas) copiously in my discourse. But, O Saints, give me some respite so that I shall give a detailed exposition of the Gita (1166-1170).

Chapter Fourteenth

THE THREE QUALITIES

O Master, glory to you. You are the greatest among all gods, the morning sun that gives light in the form of intelligence and the dawn of happiness. You are the resting place of all, the one who brings about the experience of the idea; "I am myself the Supreme Brahman" and the ocean in which the waves rock all the worlds. Glory to you. O friend of the poor, you are the eternal sea of compassion and the Lord of the bride in the form of Brahmic lore. To' those from whom you hide yourself, you show this world appearance and to those to whom you disclose yourself, you make it appear that you are all. The magician performs magic by deluding the vision of others. But your sport is so wonderful that you make them forget themselves (1-5). You impart self-knowledge to some, but bring others under the sway of Maya; such is your skill, I bow to you. It is you who have given sweetness to the water and forgiveness to the earth. It is because of your power of splendour that the sun and the moon, which are mere shells, illumine the three worlds. It is because of your divine power that the wind blows and the sky plays the game of hide and seek. All this is your limitless Maya, and knowledge too secures its vision from you. Enough of this because even the Vedas suffer fatigue while describing you (6-10). The Vedas proceed with their description so long as they do not get a glimpse of you, but on realising you, both the Vedas and we come on the common plane of muteness. When the world is in deluge, drops of water do not count and even the big rivers cannot be spotted out. When the sun rises on the horizon, even the moon looks Lustreless like the glow-worm. In the same way, both the Vedas and we are reduced to the same level, when we are pitted against you. How can I describe you, before whom the notion of duality disappears and both the most inarticulate *(para)* and the articulate speech *(vaikhary)* become mute. It is, therefore, meet that I should stop praising you and prostrate myself at your feet (11-15).

Therefore, I bow to you. O Master, in whatever form you may be. Please be my financier to make this my business of composition fruitful and release the capital in the form of your grace. Then pour this capital into the bag of my intellect and bestow upon me the gift of versification of knowledge. Then I shall labour with love and adorn the ears of the saints with beautiful ear-rings in the from of discriminating knowledge. O my Master, I wish to discover the hidden treasure in the form of the import of the Gita and so I beg you to put in my eyes collyrium in the form of your affection (so that I can see the treasure). Kindly shed on me your pure light from the solar disc in the form of your compassion (16-20). O merciful Master, please act like the spring and make the beautiful creeper in the

form of my intellect fruitful with poetry. Kindly pour on me your generous and kind glance, so that the Ganges in the form of my intellect will become overfull with the import of the Gita. Oh refuge of the universe, just as the moon makes the full moon night lovely, so let your grace be the source of inspiration to me. At the sight of this moon, the sea of my knowledge will swell into full tide and make the channels of my poetic genius overflow with the nine sentiments.

Hearing these words, the Master was thoroughly pleased and said, "By way of praising me, you are unnecessarily promoting the sense of duality (21-25). Leave this praise alone and take up seriously the subject of knowledge. Explain it well and do not allow the interest of the hearers to flag." (On this Shri Jnanadeva said:) O Lord, I was only waiting for you to say, 'proceed 'with your discourse.' The Doob grass is naturally ever green and now it has received the ambrosial shower. Since I have received the grace of my Guru, I shall now give a detailed and eloquent exposition of the meaning of each and every word in the Gita. This exposition will remove all the lingering doubts in the minds of the hearers and whet their appetite to hear more and more (26-30). I seek the favour of my preceptor so that sweet and sound words will come out of my mouth.

In the last chapter, Lord Krishna had told Arjuna that the universe takes birth from the union of the Self and the prakriti and the Self becomes involved in worldly life because of his association with her qualities (gunas). As the Self comes under the sway of prakriti, he has to experience pleasure and pain, and when he goes beyond the qualities, he attains salvation. How the unattached Self becomes attached to the prakriti, how and in what manner the Self is united with the prakriti, how he comes to experience pleasure and pain (31-35), how many are the qualities and of what nature, how the qualities lead to bondage and what are the characteristics of a person who transcends the qualities - all these matters are described in the fourteenth chapter. Now hear the opinion held by the Lord of the universe who resides in Vaikuntha. The Lord said, O Arjuna, gather all your hearing faculties together and comprehend this knowledge. I had earlier explained this knowledge to you in many ways, but I find that you have not been able to grasp it yet {36-40).

The blessed Lord said,

1. *I shall again proclaim the wisdom, the highest of all knowledges, knowing which all the sages have attained liberation from here.*

   Now, I shall tell you again the meaning of the word highest *(para),* which is applied to the spiritual knowledge by the scriptures. The other knowledge's do not take us beyond worldly existence and heaven and so the word 'highest' has been used to indicate that the knowledge of the Self is

'beyond' them. I call this knowledge of the Self as highest, because this knowledge is like Are and the other knowledge's mere straw before it. That knowledge's which esteem only worldly life and heaven, which value only works such as sacrificial rites. Which entertain the notion of duality, appear like dreams before this knowledge of the Self. Just as the whirlwind gets dissolved in the sky (41-45) or the moon and other stars lose their splendour with the rising of the sun, or deluge obliterates all distinction between small and great rivers, so all other knowledge's are dissolved with the dawn of Self-knowledge. It is for this reason, O Arjuna; we call the latter the 'highest' knowledge. O son of Pandu, that pristine state which is within us from time immemorial, known as complete deliverance, is attained only through this knowledge. With the realisation of this knowledge, the thoughtful persons do not allow worldly existence to raise its head. By withdrawing the mind from the sense-objects, they become tranquil and do not come under the sway of the body, even though possessed of the body (46-50). Then they cross over the hedge of the body and come up to the same level as myself with an equable mind.

2. *Having token refuge in this wisdom, they have reached My likeness; so they are not reborn at the time of creation nor do they suffer at the time of dissolution.*

   For, O Arjuna, they have become eternal like me and have attained perfection. They too become like me limitless, blissful and established in Truth. Then there remains no distinction between them and me. They become like me, of the same magnitude and nature. Just as with the destruction of the jar the space within the jar merges with the akasha, or the wick flames lit up from a lamp, when mingled, give the same light as the original lamp (51-55), with the elimination of the notion of duality, such distinctions as 'I' and 'you' vanish and they all enjoy company of one another. Therefore, when the time for the creation of the world arrives, they do not have rebirth. So when they are not bound by the body while alive, how can they meet with death at the time of dissolution? O winner of wealth, those, who pursuing this knowledge have become one with me, have transcended the cycle of births and deaths. In this manner, the Lord praised this knowledge of the Self in order to create a liking for it in the mind of Partha (56-60). At that time, Arjuna had reached such a state that he was all ears and attentive to what the Lord was telling. He was trying to understand with rapt attention the Lord's discourse, which could not be encompassed by the sky. Then the Lord said, "I have in you, O Arjuna, a listener equal for my discourse. So my eloquence has found a suitable mate in your knowledge. Now I shall tell you how though single, I am bound in the fetters of the body by the hunter in the form of the three qualities and how I create this world in association with the prakriti (61-65). Because of my union with prakriti, beings are produced from my seed and so the prakriti is known as the Field.

3. *Prakriti is My womb wherein I place the seed. From that, O Bharata, ensues the birth of all beings.*

   Since this prakriti is the resting place of the Great Principle (mahat) and others, she is known as mahad-brahman. O Arjuna, since all modifications take place because of her, she is called the mahad-brahman. The advocates of the doctrine of the unmanifest call it Unmanifest, the Sankhyas call it prakriti and. O the best among the wise, the Vedantists name it Maya. But why say more? What is known as ignorance is this (66-70). O winner of wealth, ignorance is that by reason of which we forget our essential nature. A special feature of this ignorance is that it is not discernible when we think of our essential nature, just as when we take up the lamp darkness vanishes, or just as cream is dissolved in the milk when it is heated and stirred up, but appears when it is only heated. Ignorance is like deep sleep, which is not the wakeful state nor dream nor samadhi, just as the sky becomes quiet when the wind stops (71-75). As one cannot determine whether what one sees yonder is a pillar or a person, so one cannot say anything definite what - the Self is or whether it is something different. When there is neither day nor night but a period of twilight known as the evening, so ignorance is neither knowledge nor its opposite, but some state which is intermediate between the two. When the Self is covered by ignorance, it is called the embodied Self give or the knower of the field (kshetrajna). That it does not know its essential nature and promotes ignorance is the special feature of the knower of the field (76-80). You should grasp firmly this union between the Self and the Maya, because this union is the natural trait of the Self. It is because of his union with prakriti that the Self forgets his pristine nature and assumes a different form. This is in the same way as the pauper becomes deluded and raves, 'behold the king is coming' referring to himself or a person who has just recovered from a swoon says, 'I had been to the heaven.' Thus when a person's vision strays away from the essential nature of the Self, whatever he perceives is the world, which is created from myself. A person, although single, becomes deluded by a dream and sees himself in diverse forms. This is what happens to the embodied self. when he forgets his essential nature (81-85).

   I shall elucidate this proposition to you in another way, by which you would experience it. This avidya (ignorance) is my consort, and she is ever young, beginningless and of ' indescribable qualities. She has no definite form, her sphere of activity is immense and she remains close to the ignorant and away from the wise. She is wide awake while I am asleep and she conceives by virtue of her union with the Supreme Self. And in the womb of this elemental nature, grows the foetus of eightfold modification (86-90). From her union with the Self is born the Great Principle and from the latter the mind. From the tender feeling (mamata) arises egoism and from egoism the Ave gross elements. As the sense

organs and their objects are intimately associated with the gross elements, they are also generated along with them. When the passions flare up with the backing of the three qualities. they immediately give rise to inchoate cravings. Just as the seed, coming into contact with water, sprouts (91-95), so when the Maya is united with me, she bears diverse shoots in the form of the universe. O prince among the wise, hear now how this embryo takes different forms. From this embryo arise four different orders, according as they born from the egg (andaja) from the sweat (svedaja), from sprouts (udbhija) and the womb (jaraja) That which is formed chiefly from the combination of the sky and wind is known as andaja. That which contains chiefly a combination of water and fire with rajas and tamas qualities is called svedaja (96-100). That which consists predominantly of water and earth combined with the inferior quality tamas is called the udbhija And that order which consists of the five senses of knowledge and five senses of action, combined with mind and intellect is known as jaraja. Thus the Maya has given birth to a queer child, of which these four orders form its hands and feet, the eight-fold prakriti its head, activity is its protruding belly, renunciation its straight back, the eight orders of deities the body above the waist, the blissful heaven its neck, the mortal world its trunk and the nether world the body below the waist (101-105). The expansion of the three worlds is the buxom health of the child and the eighty-four lakhs of species are the joints of its bodily frame. When this child began to grow, the Maya adorned its different limbs in the form of many bodies with ever new ornaments and suckled it with her milk in the form of infatuation. She has decked its Angers in the form of the different worlds with rings.

After giving birth to this single child consisting of the animate and inanimate universe, this beautiful and captivating Maya felt very proud of herself (106-110). God Brahma, God Vishnu and God Shiva are respectively the morning, the noon and the evening to this child. After laying out this play of the universe, the child (feeling fatigued) goes to sleep on the bed of the world-dissolution and wakes up at the dawn of the epoch through false knowledge. In this way the child grows and takes strides in the form of the recurring succession of epochs in the house of ignorance. This child, with volition as its friend and egoism as its playmate, meets its death only through real knowledge. Now I shall stop this elaborate discussion and tell you simply that this Maya gave birth to this universe, only with the aid of my power (111-115).

4. *Whatever forms are born in all wombs, O son of Kunti, of them the prakriti is the womb and I the father, who plants the seed.*

For this reason, O Arjuna, I am the father and the Maya the mother of this universe, which is our offspring. Now do not consider these bodies as distinct, because the mind, intellect, the senses and the elements are all

the same. Are there not different organs in one and the same body? So this variegated world has sprung from a single entity. Just as a tree, produced from a single seed. has different kinds of branches, some long, some short and some crooked, such is the relationship between the universe and myself. Just as an earthern pot is the child of clay and cloth the grand-child of cotton, (116-120), or the innumerable waves are the offsprings of the sea, the universe stands in the same relationship with me. Just as the Are and flames are the same, so the universe and myself are one and the same. It is, therefore a mistake to conceive of a relationship between us. If as a result of the creation of this world. my form is suppressed there, what is it that displays itself in the form of the world? Is a ruby lost in its own lustre? If ornaments are made of gold, do they lose their quality of being gold? Does a lotus lose its quality as a lotus, when it blooms? O Arjuna, do the organs conceal the form of the body or do they constitute its very form (121-125)? If the jowar (kind of grain) plant grows and produces ears of corn, should we say that it has exhausted itself or multiplied itself? It is, therefore, not possible for you to view me apart from the world, because I am this entire universe. Please keep this thought firmly fixed in your mind. Whatever different forms of bodies I have assumed, know that it is because I am bound in them by the fetters of qualities. Just as when a person wakes up from sleep, he says that I had died in a dream, (126-130), or a patient suffering from jaundice sees all things around him as yellow, or as one sees in the sunlight the sun screened by the clouds or as a person is frightened of his own shadow, thinking that it is a different person that he sees, in the same way, I have become many in different bodies through bondage which you should try to understand. This bondage does not last on the attainment of my knowledge, but through ignorance we become our own fetters (131-135). Therefore, O Arjuna, do hear about what this bondage is and by what gunas one considers himself bound. I shall tell you now how many are these gunas, what are their properties, what is their nature and their names, and also from whom they have sprung.

5. *Sattva, rajas and tamas are qualities born of prakriti; they bind fast, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), the immutable Self to the body.*

   Sattva, rajas and tamas are the names of these three gunas and they are born of prakriti Of these three gunas, sattva is the best, rajas is of middling quality and tamas is inferior. All these three qualifies are seen in every mental state. Just as the same body undergoes childhood, youth and old age (136-140) or when gold is mixed with an alloy its weight increases with a consequent loss of purity, or one falls into deep sleep through sloth, so the mental state which is caused by tamas besides; sattva and rajas grows strong through ignorance. Such are the gunas and I shall tell you now how these gunas bind the Self. The Self becomes embodied by reason of his body-consciousness, at an inauspicious time (141-145).

From birth till death, he identifies himself with his body and ascribes its properties to himself. As soon as the fish swallows the bait, the angler winds his line.

6. *Of these sattva being pure is luminous and wholesome; it binds him by attachment to happiness and by attachment to knowledge, O sinless one.*

   In this way, the hunter sattva gathers the embodied Self like a deer in his snares of pleasure and knowledge. Then the latter waxes eloquent with his knowledge, kicks about in the pride of his learning and so becomes parted from the bliss of Self which is his own. He becomes thoroughly pleased, if he is honoured as a learned person, is elated with a trifling gain and boasts that he is easily satisfied (146-150). He says, "there is no one as happy as myself, I am so lucky." And the eight sattvic sentiments surge up in his mind. The matter does not stop here, because another bond gets at him. He becomes possessed by the goblin in the form of self-conceit of his erudition. He does not feel sorry in the least for the loss of knowledge that he is knowledge himself. On the contrary, he becomes puffed up by being immersed in sensuous pleasures. Just as a king dreams that he has become a beggar and thinks himself to be the lord of heaven. if he gets some more alms, so the Self which is beyond body imagines himself because of his mundane knowledge that he possesses a body (151-155). He becomes an expert in active worldly life, proficient in sacrificial lore and his knowledge reaches the sky. He boasts that no one is as learned as himself, so much so that his mind has become like the sky, harboring the moon of sagacity. This, quality of the sattva ties fetters in the form of happiness and knowledge and drags the helpless person like a bull. Now I shall tell you how the embodied self is bound by the quality of rajas.

7. *Know that rajas is of the nature of passion, born of desire and attachment; it binds fast a person, O son of Kunti (Arjuna), through attachment to action.*

   It is called rajas as it amuses the embodied Self and keep his desire for sensuous pleasures ever fresh (156-160). Even if it gets a little access to the mind. it makes him run after sense- objects and then the embodied self rides on the wind of passion. Then just as sacrificial fire blazes forth when fed with ghee, and burns all things great and small, so his desire becomes inordinate, and even painful things seem pleasurable to him. Then even if he acquires the wealth of the God of heaven, he considers it too little. In this way, when his passion grows strong he is not satisfied even if the Meru mountain falls in his hands and he craves for bigger things. He is willing to scarce his life even for a two-penny coin and feels happy if he secures even a blade of grass (161-165). He feels anxious as to how he will fare when all his wealth is exhausted and expands his business with great zeal. He begins to worry as to what he will live on in

heaven, and so he undertakes sacrifices. observes vows after vows, builds wells, tanks etc. and performs only rites which bear fruit. Just as the wind blows continuously without respite in the last month of summer, he labours hard day and night in his business. The movements of fish or the side-glances of a beautiful maiden are fickle and the lightening is more fickle than them. But all these three are not At to hold a candle to the rajas quality (166-170). One leaps into the Are of activity with great haste in the hope of securing sensuous enjoyments in this world or heaven. Thus the embodied Self, even though separate from the body, is bound by the fetters of desires and becomes involved in various business deals. In this way, he is bound by the strong fetters of the rajas quality. Now I shall tell you the characteristics of the tamas quality.

8. *But know that tamas born of ignorance deludes all persons; it binds them, O descendent of Bharata, by inattention, sloth and sleep.*

That which, O Partha, is known as the tamas quality, which acts like a vell and dims the vision of common-sense and is like a cloudy sky of the night of infatuation. It grows with ignorance and deludes the universe and makes it dance round its Angers (171-175). It has thoughtlessness as its great mantra (mystic formula), it is a decanter filled with the wine of ignorance, or a bewitching weapon which infatuates all beings, By such devices it ties up those who regard their body as the Self, When it begins to grow up in all created things, it leaves no scope for others to grow. It blunts the organs, deludes the mind and gives shelter to sloth. It makes the body slack, and one loses all enthusiasm for work and yawns every now and then (176-180). Such a person cannot see even when his eyes are open and gets up, responding to a call, thinking that he heard some one. Just as a slab falls on one side and does not turn the other way, so when he goes to sleep contracting his body, he does not turn over. He does not feel like getting up. even if the earth sinks or the heaven falls. When he feels sleepy, he does not recollect what is proper or improper; but only likes to remain in a reclining position. He raises his hand to the forehead or sits with his head on the knees (181-185). He is so fond of sleep that he scorns heavenly bliss before it. He has no other vice except that he wishes to live as long as god Brahma and, pass it in slumber. If he trips down while walking, he goes to sleep on the road, and when he is sleepy he refuses even a drink of nectar offered to him. If he is forced to work on occasions. he becomes blind with rage. He does not know how to behave, with whom to talk and what and does not pause to think whether a thing will become available or not (186-190). Just as a moth jumps into fire. foolishly thinking that it will put out its flame with its wings, so he ventures to do something which he ought not to do. In short, he likes to do stupid careless mistakes. Thus the tamas quality ties up the pure self with a triple bond of sleep, sloth and heedlessness.

Just as the Are, while burning a piece of wood, appears to- take its shape or the sky takes the form of an earthen pot or a lake full of water has the reflection of the moon, so the embodied Self is bound by the fetters of the gunas and imagines, through ignorance that he possess their properties (191-195).

9. *Sattva makes one attached to happiness, and rajas to action, O Bharata; but obscuring knowledge, tamas makes one attached to negligence.*
10. *By suppressing rajas and tamas, sattva prevails, O Bharata; rajas (prevails) by suppressing sattva and tamas, and tamas (prevails) by suppressing sattva and rajas.*

Just as the bile, after suppressing phlegm and wind, increases in the body and makes it heated or the cold sets in after the hot and the rainy seasons are over, or the mind falls into the state of deep slumber for a while, when the states of waking and dream disappear, in the same way when the sattva increases, overpowering rajas and tamas, a person says, "I am so happy." Similarly when *tamas* becomes strong, overpowering the qualities of sattva and rajas, the embodied Self is prone to commit blunders (196-200). In the same way, when rajas overpowers and exceeds the sattva and tamas qualities, then this lord of the body feels that nothing is more desirable than action. Thus I have described to you the characteristics of the three qualities. Now listen carefully to the symptoms of the growth of these qualities.

11. *When in all the gates of the body, the light of knowledge shines forth, then one should know that sattva has increased.*
12. *Greed activity, enterprise, restlessness and craving these arise when rajas is on the increase, O best of the Bharatas (Arjuna).*
13. *Dullness and inaction as also negligence and delusion these arise when tamas increases, O Joy of the Kurus (Arjuna).*
14. *If a person meets his death when sattva prevails, then he attains the spotless worlds of those who know the highest (entities).*
15. *Meeting his death in rajas he is born among those attached to work, and the one absorbed in tamas is born in the dull species.*

When the sattva increases in the body overpowering rajas and tamas, then the following are the characteristics of the embodied Self. Just as in the spring the lotus blooms and spreads its fragrance all round, so the light of his knowledge spreads outside, overflowing the interior (201-205). The discrimination remains watchful in all the sense organs and even the hands and feet acquire vision. Just as the swan decides which is milk and which is water, so the senses themselves decide what is proper and what is improper and sense-restraint becomes their servant. The ears avoid hearing what they ought not to hear, the eyes avoid seeing what they ought not to see, their tongue avoids speaking what ought not to be

uttered. Just as darkness flees from light, so prohibited actions dare not stand before the senses (206-210). His intellect delves into all lores, as the river is flooded in the rainy season. Just as the light of the full moon floods the whole sky, so all knowledge spreads in his mind. All his desires wane, his predilection for activity ebbs and his mind abhores sensuous pleasures. If death intervenes when his sattva is on the increase he takes birth in an excellent body as though a person has got a bumper harvest and has received as guests his forefathers on the festive occasion of their death anniversary (shraddha) day, (211-215). If there be great riches in the house with generosity and courage of mind to match, would not such a person receive plaudits in this world and attain to heaven? If such a person who has a pure and spotless conduct, with his sattva on the increase, dies, what would be his destination? If such a person leaves his body, the best seat of sensuous enjoyments, being endowed with the sattva, he becomes sattva incarnate and takes his next birth among men of knowledge. O archer, if a crowned king goes to the forest, does he suffer any want there (216-220)? O Arjuna, if the lamp is taken to another hamlet, it continues to be a lamp there and so when the sattva of a person becomes pure, his knowledge increases and his intellect floats on that knowledge. Then thinking over the order in which the world has sprung from the Great Principle, he becomes merged in the Self along with his thought. When the sattva increases, he takes birth and assumes the best body in the family of' those who have got an access to the Self which - is the thirty-seventh principle in Vedanta (XIII-5, 6) or the twenty-fifth principle of the Sankhayas or the fourth which transcends the gunas (221-225).

In the same way when the rajas increases overpowering sattva and tamas, he runs riot in the terrain of the body by his actions. Then he is possessed of the following characteristics. Just as when the whirl-wind gathers all things from the earth and whirls them high in the sky, so he allows a free hand to the senses to indulge in sensual pleasures. He does not think it against the scriptures to cast a lustful eye on another's wife and so his senses indulge freely in sensual enjoyments, as sheep graze wherever they want. His greed becomes so inordinate that only things escape his clutches which are beyond his reach (226-230). And he does not flinch from undertaking any business. He develops an extraordinary fancy to build a temple or perform a horse sacrifice. He undertakes huge works like establishing townships or constructing reservoirs or planting forests. But even then his desires for happiness in this or the next work remain unfulfilled. His desires become so inordinate and intolerable that even the sea accepts defeat or the burning power of the Are proves mild before it (231-235). His hopes and expectations gallop ahead of the mind and his desire remains unsatisfied even if he traverses the whole world. Such signs make it known that his rajas quality is on the increase, and if he dies in this state, he enters a new human body and becomes endowed

with the same characteristics. Does a beggar become a king, if he sits in a palace with all means of enjoyment at his beck and call? If a bull goes in a marriage procession of a rich person, he does not get anything better than jowar-stalks to eat (236-240). He, therefore, finds himself after death in the company of men who are engrossed in worldly affairs day and night without a moment's rest. In short, if a person dies after being drowned in the deep waters in the form of rajas i.e. tendencies, he takes birth in the family of a person engrossed in actions.

When the tamas quality overpowers the sattva and rajas and increases in a person, he displays the following characteristics. His mental state is like that of the sky on the dark night of the new moon day when there is neither the sun nor moon to light it (241-245). His mind then becomes listless and dull, and he loses all interest in discriminating knowledge. The intellect loses its tenderness to such an extent that it surpasses a stone in hardness and it appears as if he has lost memory. His body is full of thoughtless arrogance in and out and all his transactions are utterly foolish. The immoral actions which ought to prick his conscience (literally senses) come to an end only with his death. He takes great pleasure in doing wicked things, as an owl sees only at night (246-250). He has an extraordinary passion to do prohibited actions and his senses also run after them. He becomes intoxicated without being drunk, raves without being in delirium of high fever and becomes infatuated without love like a madman. He loses control over his mind, but this is , not the state of samadhi, deep contemplation, because his mind has become hysterical on account of delusion. In short, these signs appear when the tamas quality waxes strong with all its paraphernalia. If he dies at this time, he takes his birth endowed with tamas (251-255). If a mustard seed is sown and grows into a plant after losing its form, what will it produce except mustard? Even though the Are becomes extinguished after lighting a lamp, whatever the lamp touches catches Are. In the same way, whoever leaves his body carrying with him a bundle of desires imbued with tamas, his new birth also takes a form dominated by tamas. In short, if death comes when the tamas waxes strong, he is reborn as an animal, a bird, a tree or an insect.

16. *The fruit of a good action, they say, is good and spotless. But the fruit of rajas is pain, and ignorance is the fruit of tamas.*

For this reason it is stated in the Vedas that whatever is produced by the sattva quality is a virtuous action (256-260). Therefore the unique fruits of happiness and knowledge are gained through pure sattva quality. All actions which result from rajas are pleasant to look at like the vrindavan (colocynth) fruits but they are full of pain. Just as the fruit of the neem tree looks fine, but has a bitter taste as that of poison, such is the fruit of rajas-

ridden action. As poisonous roots produce only poisonous plants, so actions arising from tamas yield fruits in the form of ignorance.

17. *From sattva arises knowledge, from rajas only greed and from tamas arise negligence, delusion and ignorance.*

    Therefore, O Arjuna, the sattva is the cause of knowledge, as the sun is the cause of the day (261-265). Similarly, greed is caused by the rajas quality. as the forgetfulness of his non-dual nature causes the Supreme Self to be embodied. O wise Arjuna, the tamas quality gives rise to the three faults of delusion, ignorance and heedlessness, I have taught you separately the distinctive characteristics of these three qualities so that you can discern them clearly like the avala fruit (emblic myrobalam) kept on an open palm. Out of the three, rajas, and tamas lead to a man's fall, while the sattva alone conduces to knowledge. It is for this reason that some practise the sattvic states from their very birth, just as some prefer the fourth kind of devotion (accompanied by knowledge of the Self to the other three kinds of devotion and follow it (266-270).

18. *Abiding in sattva they go upwards, those in rajas remain in the middle; and downward go those in tamas abiding in the functions of the lowest quality.*

    Those who follow the sattvic way with a happy mood, dwell in heaven after leaving the body. Similarly those who live and die following the rajas way are born as human beings. There they have to eat in the same plate (in the form of the body) hotchpotch rice of mixed pulses and spices consisting of pleasure and pain and they cannot avoid death. Likewise, those who grow in the tamas quality, get a warrant of going to hell after death. Thus I have explained to you the three qualities along with their characteristic functions under the superintendence of the Self (271-275). The Self, without undergoing any change, imitates the functions of the three gunas which are its adjuncts. In a dream one becomes a king and wins a victory over or suffers defeat from an advancing army of his enemy, but in reality he has become all that himself. In the same way, the heaven, earth and the nether world are modifications of the gunas. In reality, if one sees what is beyond the gunas, one realises that all these modifications are essentially of the nature of the Self.

19. *When the seer perceives no agent other than the qualities and knows that which is higher than the qualities, he attains to My nature.*

    Enough of this elaborate discussion. Bear in mind that there is naught except the supreme Self. Now I shall tell you what I had narrated to you earlier. Know that all these three qualities assume the form of the body, acting under the authority of the supreme Self (276-280). Just as the Are assumes the form of the firewood which it burns or the earth and water are

seen in the form of a tree, or milk when coagulated takes the form of curds, or sweetness appears in the form of the sugar-cane, so these three qualities assume the form of body along with the mind and lead to bondage. But, O archer, it is a marvel that this wide net of the gunas do not come in the way of liberation. These three gunas push the body to and from according to their functions, but they do not cause any obstruction in your transcending them (281-285).

Now I shall tell you the nature of deliverance, as you are like a bee on the lotus in the form of knowledge. I have already told you the ultimate truth that the conscious Self though abiding in the qualities, is devoid of qualities, and I am repeating it here. This, O Partha, one realises only when one attains the knowledge of the Self. Just as one realises on waking up that the dream was false, or one standing on the bank of a river sees one's many reflections in the ripples of water, or an actor plays different roles with great skill but is not deceived thereby, so the embodied Self does not regard himself as possessed of gunas, but knows that he is theirmere witness (286-290). Just as the sky does not change in the three seasons, so the Self, though united with the three gunas, remains in his self-existent nature which is beyond them. But he always retains his original nature throughout, and when he realises this, he says "I am not the agent of actions but their mere witness and it is the gunas which determine and control all activity. All actions result from the modifications of the three gunas; so they are all the products of gunas. I am related to the gunas in the same way as the spring is to the beauty of the woods (291-295). Though with the sunrise the stars become dim, the sunstone sparkles, the lotuses bloom or the darkness is dispelled, the sun is not the cause of them. In the same way although actions take place under my authority, I am not their agent. though I dwell in the body. The gunas become perceptible, as I display them and I support their power. I am that which remains behind after their extinction. In this way, he who has attained this knowledge has transcended the gunas and become gunatita.

20. *After transcending the three qualities, which are the cause of the body, the embodied Self enjoys immortality, freed from the miseries of birth, death and old age.*

Then he comes to realise unerringly that Brahman is devoid of qualities. Now this knowledge has impressed its stamp on his mind (296-300). Just as, O Arjuna, the rivers join the sea, or the parrot leaves the tube and sits on the branch of a tree free from delusion. so one who has transcended gunas realises that he himself is Brahman. O wise Arjuna he who was snoring loudly in slumber in the form of ignorance is awakened now to his essential nature. Since the mirror of delusion has dropped from his hand, he cannot now see his reflection in it. As with the stoppage of the wind the waves become one with the sea, so with the loss of body-consciousness,

the embodied Self becomes one with the Supreme Self (301-305). When this happens, he who has transcended the gunas becomes united with me. Just as the clouds become dissolved in the sky at the end of the rainy season, so after becoming one with me, he does not get into the clutches of the gunas, although he is very much in the body. Just as a lamp kept in the glass-house spreads its light outside without obstruction, or the submarine fire does not get extinguished by the sea water, so his knowledge remains unaffected even if the gunas come and go. He remains unconcerned in his body, as the moon remains in the sky after being reflected in the mirror. These three gunas bring to bear their influence on the body and make it perform actions of diverse kinds, but he does not even look at them (306-310). He is so engrossed in his inner Self that he is not conscious of the activities of his body. If a serpent casts away its slough and enters the nether region, who is there to take care of the discarded slough? The same is the case here. Just as the fragrance which has left the lotus enters the sky and does not return to the lotus, so with the loss of body consciousness, he recognises his essential nature and is conscious of nothing else. Therefore the six qualities of body such as birth, old age and death remain in the body itself and do not affect the man of knowledge. (311-315) When an earthen pot breaks into pieces, the space enclosed therein merges automatically in the infinite space. In the same way, when the consciousness of the body goes, he becomes mindful 'of his innate nature and then what else could remain but the Self? I call such a person who has attained to the knowledge of Self as gunatita (i.e. one who has transcended the gunas). As the thunder of the cloud delights the peacock, so this speech of Lord Krishna made Partha very happy.

Arjuna said:

21. *By what marks, O Lord is one (known) who has transcended the three gunas? How does he conduct himself and how does he overcome these three qualities?*

Then the heroic Arjuna said to Lord Krishna joyfully: What, O Lord, are the characteristics of a person, who has realised the Self (316-320)? How does one who has transcended the gunas behave and how does he go beyond the gunas? O Lord, you are the home of kindness, please explain all this to me. Now listen to the reply given by Shri Krishna, who is the Lord of the six virtues. He said: I am surprised at your question. If any conduct is ascribed to him, then his description as gunatita will prove inappropriate. One who has transcended the gunas is not subject to them. Even if he moves amidst them, he does not come under their clutches. But if your doubt is how to know whether such a person who is always associated with the gunas is under their subjection or not (321-325), then

you are welcome to ask about it. I shall tell you the distinguishing marks of such a person.

The blessed Lord said:

22. *(When) illumination, activity and delusion, O son of Pandu (Arjuna), are at work, he does not hate them nor does he crave for them when they cease.*

When the rajas quality waxes strong and the body produces sprouts of actions, and he is drawn into the worldly. life, then he is not puffed up with the pride that he alone is the doer of the action because of his riches or feel sorry that he is not able to finish the work because of his poverty. When the sattva quality increases and knowledge spreads in all senses, he does not rejoice at his erudition, nor does he feel bad when the tamas increases and he is permeated by delusion (326-330). When he is under the influence of delusion, he does not wish for knowledge, nor does he give up work at the time of knowledge and become unhappy because of it. Just as the sun is not concerned with whether it is morning, noon or evening, so he does not pay any attention to the gunas. Is it possible that a person so enlightened will need some other knowledge? Does the sea require the rain to make it full? In the same way, how will he have the egoistic feeling that he is the door of actions? Do the Himalayas shiver with cold because of snow? Tell me, can the summer however severe scorch the fire? So will he lose his knowledge when he comes under the sway of delusion (331-335)?

23. *He who remains like one disinterested and is not moved by the gunas, and who, knowing that the gunas act, remains aloof and does not waver,*

Since he considers the gunas and their functions, as his own Self, he is not separated from them. He remains in the body in a disinterested spirit, just as a traveller breaks his journey on the way and stays in a rest-house. Just as the battle ground is indifferent to the conqueror or the conquered, so he neither conquers the gunas nor is he overcome by them. Nor does he come under the sway of gunas and perform actions or get them performed through them. He remains as fndifferent to events around him, like the prana in the body or, a guest who has come to the house or the pole at a meeting place. O Arjuna, just as the Meru mountain does not deflect when assailed by the waves of the mirage, so he is not perturbed by the movements of the gunas (336-340). Is the sky ever moved by wind or has the darkness ever swallowed the sun?

Just as a person wide awake does not dream, so an enlightened person is not bound by the gunas. Without corning under the influence of the gunas, he sees their play as from a distance, like a spectator who sees the play of puppets. When his sattvic tendencies remain engaged in good actions, his

rajasic tendencies in sensuous enjoyments and his tamasic tendencies in delusion, he knows that all these actions of the gunas take place under the power of his Self. The sun is a mere witness to all worldly affairs (341-345). The moon, because of whom the sea gets its tides, the moonstone oozes and the white lilies bloom, remains inactive. The sky remains steady, even when the wind blows violently or remains lulled. In the same way, he does not become agitated even if the gunas create a bustle. O Arjuna, in this way, I have told you the characteristics of a person who. has transcended the gunas. Now I shall tell you what his conduct is like

24. *And who remain self-poised, same in happiness and sorrow and same to a lump of clay, stone and gold, who remains firm and same to pleasant and unpleasant things and to censure and praise,*

    O Arjuna, just as there is nothing except yarn in the cloth, so when he becomes one with me, he sees nothing but me in all the things, animate and inanimate. Just as God gives the same salvation to his devotees and enemies, so he treats equally pleasure and pain when they come his way, like the scales which are well balanced (346-350). He remains in the body like fish in water and experiences pleasure and pain. Now he has given up body-consciousness and become one with the Self. When the seed is sown in the ground. It grows and produces grain or the rattling noise of the river subsides when it joins the sea. In the same way, when a person has become one with the Self, he is not affected by pleasure and pain, even though he remains in the body. Just as the day and night are the same to a pole, so pleasure and pain are the same to the Self in the body (351-355). Just as a man in sound sleep feels the contact with a serpent as very much like the touch of the nymph Urvashi, so a person immersed in his essential nature treats equally pleasure and pain which come to his share. So dung and gold seem alike to him and a jewel and a stone make no difference to him. Even if heaven visits him or the tiger assails him, his Self-hood is not disturbed. Just as a dead person does not become alive, or a roasted seed does not grow, so his equanimity is not disturbed. Whether he is praised as god Brahma or blamed as a base person, he remains unaffected like a masa of ashes, which can neither burn nor become extinguished (356-360). Praise or slander does not cause any pleasure or displeasure in him, in the same way as there is neither darkness nor a lighted lamp in the Sun's abode.

25. *And who is the same in honour and dishonour, who is equable to a friend or a foe, and who has relinquished all undertakings, he is said to be one who has transcended the gunas.*

    Even if he is worshipped as god or thrashed as a thief or is crowned as king with plenty of oxen and elephants, or is seated near friends or enemies, it is all the same to him. Just as the sun does not know day and

night, or the sky remains unaffected in all the seasons, so his mind is not affected by adverse events. There is one more thing about him. He is never seen taking part in worldly affairs, (361-365), he does not start any work, his activity has come to a stop and the fruits of his actions have got burnt in the fire of knowledge. He does not brood over the sensuous pleasures in this or the next world and enjoys whatever fate brings him. He does not rejoice when he is happy nor does he become dejected with misery, as though he is a stone. So also his mind does not reject or accept anything. Know that he alone has transcended the gunas, who conducts himself in this manner. Now I shall tell you what method one should follow to become a gunatita (366-370).

26. *And he who serves Me exclusively with yoga of devotion goes beyond these qualities and qualifies to become Brahman.*

He who is exclusively devoted to me can burn the gunas. I must now tell you what I am, how one should become devoted to me and what are the characteristics of exclusive devotion. Just as a gem and its splendour, water and its liquidity, the sky and space, sugar and its sweetness are not different, or Are and its flame are the same or the petals make the lotus or the branches and fruits mean the tree (371-375), or just as cold and the vast sheets of snow constitutes the Himalaya mountains or coagulated milk becomes the curds, so what is known as the universe is myself. It is not necessary to feel the phases of the moon to see them, or ghee remains the same in its frozen state, or the gold bangle remains gold even without melting it, o. cloth, even without being torn, is yarn, or the earthen pot is clay without being broken into pieces, so it is not necessary to sublet the phenomenal world to know me, but to know me along with it (376-380). If this devotion is offered to me by making a distinction between myself and the universe, it becomes wanton. So know me by an unswerving mind that I am not distinct from the universe, O Partha. As a speck of gold affixed to a gold ornament does not become distinct from it, so think yourself to be not different from the universe. Just as the rays of the sun have the same splendour and are not distinct from it, so let this notion of unity be Axed in your mind. Just as there is no difference between the earth particles and earth or the snow particles and the Himalayas, so see the universe as abiding in me (381-385). Even the smallest wave is not different from the sea; so the Self is not distinct from God. If one attains this blissful state of vision of one's identity with God, it is the highest form of devotion. This vision is the quintessence of knowledge and yoga. Just as the mutual relation between the sea and the cloud has a continuous flow, so his mental attitude remains the same. Just as there is no joint connecting the mouth of the well with the sky, similar is his oneness with the supreme Self (386-390).

Just as the Sun's splendour remains the same from his disc upto the reflection, the idea that I am Brahman carries on the top and disappears when the mind identifies itself with the Supreme Self. Just as a piece of salt dissolves in the sea. or the fire becomes extinguished after the grass is burnt, so in the absence of a notion of distinction, knowledge also ceases to exist. The false notion that the devotee is on this shore and I am on the yonder shore (of the sea of existence) disappears and what remains is the eternal union between us (391-395). Then all talk about the conquest of gunas ceases, because the gunas also cease, when both of us unite in close embrace. In short, O discerning Arjuna, this is what is known as the Brahmic state. He who worships me with devotion alone attains to it. I would add that the Brahmic state weds my devotee who is endowed with the above-mentioned characteristics. Just as the flowing water of the Ganges has no other destination but the sea, so whoever serves me with the vision of knowledge, becomes a great devotee (literally a jewel in the diadem of the Brahmic state) (396-400). This Brahmic state is also known as the sayujya mukti (i.e. absorption of the Self in the Supreme Self or the fourth aim of human existence). My worship is the ladder by which you can reach me. But do not think that I am different from the means of attaining me. Do not entertain the idea that you are distinct from Brahman.

27. *For I am the embodiment of Brahman, immortal and immutable, and of the perennial Law and of absolute bliss.*

O son of Pandu, Brahman is my name and I am addressed by this word. Just as the moon is not different from its disc, so, O discerning Arjuna, there is no difference between Brahman and me (401-405). This Brahman is eternal, immutable and vivid; it is righteousness incarnate and the giver of unique and unlimited bliss. I am the ultimate entity determined by the (Vedanta) doctrine, in which the knowledge becomes dissolved after fulfilling its function.

Thus spoke to heroic Arjuna the Supreme Self, who is the friend of dedicated devotees. Then Dhritarashtra said to Sanjaya, "Why are you telling me all this without being asked? On this occasion, remove my anxiety by giving me the glad news of my son's victory. Give up all this worthless talk (406-410)". Hearing this Sanjaya was amazed and said to himself, "Alas! see the pranks of fate. The king is only feeling concerned about the war. May the Lord have mercy on him and destroy his malady of infatuation by giving him a dose of discriminating knowledge." When Sanjaya was thinking like this, he remembered the conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna and his mind was flooded with joy. He will, therefore, tell with great enthusiasm what the Lord said further. Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivritti says, "I shall impress upon your mind the substance of his talk, please give me your attention (410-415)."

Chapter Fifteenth

THE SUPREME PERSON

Now I shall make my heart the square stool*(Chouranga)* and install on it the wooden slippers (*Paduka*) of my Master. Then I shall fill the hollow formed by joining my palms in the form of unity with flower buds in the form of my sense organs and offer a floral oblation (*arghya*) at his feet. With my little Anger I shall smear his forehead with the sandal paste in the form of desire purified by the sentiment of exclusive devotion. I shall adorn the tender feet of my Master with the gold anklets in the form of Self-knowledge. I shall adorn his toes with rings in the form of single-minded and steady devotion (1-5). I shall place at his feet a fully blown lotus consisting of eight petals in the form of eight *(Sattvic)* sentiments, fragrant with joy. I shall burn before him the incense in the form of self-conceit and wave the light in the form of humility. I shall embrace him with the feeling of complete identity with him and shall make him wear a pair of wooden slippers in the form of my body and life- breath. I shall wave before him sensuous enjoyment and liberation. I shall then become fit to render service at his feet, which secures for one the four aims of human life. Let my knowledge grow in excellence until I get rest in the abode of Brahman. Let my speech become the stream of nectar-like words (6-10). Let its utterances become so sweet and eloquent that one may feel like waving around it numerous full moons. Like the East, which, with the rising sun, bestows the empire of light on the entire universe, let the speech make it a festival of lamps in the form of knowledge to the hearers. If by good luck one secures the pollen from the lotus-like feet of the revered Guru. One's speech pours forth such words that even the divine resonant sound pales before it and even liberation cannot stand comparison with it. It is because of this good fortune that the creeper in the form of speech grows so lavishly that the entire universe enjoys the lovely scenery of the spring season under the bower in the form of hearing. Because of this good luck, that speech, which was unable to fathom Brahman' and had to beat a retreat disappointed along with the mind could now easily expound it (11-15). It is because of this good luck that words were able to hold Brahman, which was unintelligible to knowledge and inaccessible to meditation. This good fortune has only come to my share, and no one else has it, so said Shri Jnanadeva. I am an infant, the only child of my preceptor, so that I am the sole recipient of his favour. Like the cloud, which sends rain for a *Chataka* bird, my Master has showered his kindness on me (16-20). So whatever I said with my uncultivated tongue, gave expression to the secret message of the Gita. If luck is favourable, sand is transformed into gems, and even an assassin becomes friendly, if one is blessed with long life. If God so wills, even pebbles, when boiled, turn into sweet cooked rice. In

the same way, if the revered Master calls anyone his own, even his mundane existence conduces to liberation. Did Lord Krishna, the incarnation of Narayana, the primeval Person revered by all, leave the Pandavas in want? (21-25). In the same way, Shri Nivrittinatha has raised my ignorance to the level of knowledge. But by talking like this only my affection for my master increases, but where can I get the wisdom to describe adequately the greatness of my Master ? Through his grace, I shall now explain to you the meaning of the Gita and render service, O saints, at your feet.

At the end of the fourteenth chapter, the Lord declared that only the man of knowledge attains liberation. Just as one who performs hundred sacrifices goes to heaven (26-30) or one who performs the religious duties prescribed for a Brahmin in hundred births attains the status of god Brahma, or the sun's light becomes available to a person who has sight, so the bliss of liberation is attained only by a man of knowledge. If one looks around to find such a person who is qualified to attain such knowledge, one comes across almost one such person. Only a person born with his feet foremost can see a treasure buried underground by putting collyrium in his eyes. In the same way there is no doubt that liberation is attained through knowledge. But the mind must become pure to be able to retain this knowledge (31-35). The Lord has, therefore, laid down after careful consideration that knowledge can be retained only through indifference to worldly life. The omniscient Lord Hari has also thought out what this indifference to the world is and how it can be cultivated. When a person, who sits down for a meal, comes to know that the food cooked is mixed with poison, he leaves the plate without eating. In the same way, if a person comes to know that the mundane existence is ephemeral, he becomes indifferent to the world. The transitory nature of the worldly life is explained in this fifteenth chapter through the simile of a tree (36-40). If ordinary trees are uprooted, they wither away. But this tree in the form of worldly existence is not like that. The Lord has skilfully suggested a way of deliverance to men from the cycle of birth and death by the use of this simile of a tree. The main purport of the Gita is to demonstrate the unreality of the world and to impart the knowledge of the real nature of the Self. This will be explained in great detail very beautifully in the fifteenth chapter, so please pay your attention. So spoke the King of Dwaraka, the ocean of great bliss and fuller than the full moon (41-45).

The blessed Lord said:

1. *With roots above and branches below, the Asvattha tree, they say, is indestructible, their leaf are the Vedic hymns; he, who knows it, is the knower of the Vedas.*

O Arjuna, that which obstructs the way leading to the abode of the Supreme Self is not this panorama of the world, but this great tree of mundane existence. But it is not like other trees, which has roots below and branches above. It is because of this that no one can fathom it. Even if its base is burnt or cut with an axe, it does not get destroyed; instead it shoots up rapidly. If the other trees are cut at the base, they become uprooted along with their branches. It is not so with this tree, which is not an ordinary tree (46-50). Curiously this is an extraordinary tree which has its growth downwards. No one knows the height of the sun, but its rays spread downwards. In the same way this tree of mundane existence grows downwards in a curious manner. Whatever things exist in this world are pervaded by this tree. Just as the entire sky is pervaded by water at the time of deluge, or the night is flooded with darkness at sunset, so this entire universe is pervaded by this tree. This tree has neither any fruit, which can be tasted, nor any flower, which can be smelled; what exists is the lone tree (51-55). Its roots grow up at the top, and so it cannot be uprooted. For this reason it is evergreen. Though it is said to have roots at the top, it has also numerous roots downwards. This tree has shot up rapidly all round like the holy Indian fig tree, and its shoots have also put forth branches. So, O Arjuna, it is not that this tree has branches only downwards, but its numerous branches have spread upwards also (56-60). It looks as though the sky has put fort4 foliage or the wind has taken the form of this tree or the three states of creation, sustenance and dissolution have become incarnate in the form of this tree. In this way this top-rooted tree has grown thick in the form of the universe. Now you may ask who is at the top of this tree, what is its origin, what are its characteristics, why this tree spreads downwards, what are its branches, what are the branches of its downward roots and how do they grow, why it is called Asvattha and what purport has been found in all this by the knowers of Self (61-65) all these queries I shall explain in such a way that you will realise them fully. Oh lucky Arjuna, you alone are fit to enquire into all this, so gather all your sense organs in the ears and hear. Hearing these words of the Yadava hero brimful with affection, Arjuna became all attention. As if all the ten quarters wanted to embrace the sky, the longing to hear the Lord's words grew in him to such an extent that he felt the Lord's discourse to be too short. Just as the sage Agastya had sipped the ocean, Arjuna wanted to sip the words of the Lord in a single draught (66-70). The Lord became very happy to see this limitless longing of Arjuna to hear him and waved his satisfaction over him.

Then the Lord said to Arjuna: O winner of wealth, this tree has become top-rooted because of Brahman, which is at the top. Really speaking there is no such thing as the middle, top or bottom in the case of Brahman, which is non-dual and one. It is the inarticulate sound, which precedes all sounds, the fragrance that is the origin of all scents, and the bliss experienced without sexual intercourse. It is here and beyond, in front and

behind, it sees everything but is itself invisible (71-75). When it comes into contact with the limiting conditions, it becomes the universe with name and form. It is knowledge without a knower and the object of knowledge and it has pervaded the universe in a subtle form. It is neither the effect nor the cause; it is neither dual nor single, it exists in full consciousness of itself. This pure Brahman is the top root of this tree and the shoots, which come forth from this root, are as follows. This universe is well known as Maya, which has no existence like the progeny of a barren woman (76-80). One cannot say that it is, or that it is not. Though not susceptible to reason. It is said to be without beginning. It is the chest full of diverse powers. It is the support of the world as the sky is the support of the clouds and it is the folded cloth in the form of universe. It is the seed of the world tree, the source of mundane existence, and it contains within it in a massive form the dim light of false knowledge. This Maya takes shelter in the Supreme Brahman and becomes manifest through its power. She is like a sleepy person who feels dull or like the dim light of a lamp covered with soot (81-85) or like a young woman who, dreaming that she is asleep beside her husband, wakes him up with an embrace (in a dream) and rouses his passion. So, O winner of wealth, this Maya that is the creature of Brahman, makes it forget its pristine nature, and this is the origin of the world-tree. This forgetfulness of its essential nature on the part of Brahman is the original top-root of this tree and is well known in Vedanta by the term seed-form (B*ijabhava*). The sound slumber in the form of deep ignorance is called the seedling form (B*ijankurabhava*) and from this arise the states of waking and sleep, which are. Known as the fruit-form (P*alabhava*) of deep slumber. These are the terms used in the discourses on Vedanta. But this apart, ignorance is the root-cause of this world-tree (86-90).

This spotless Self at the top gives out roots up and down. And they grow strong in the cavity at the base of the tree in the form of Maya. Then in the middle of those roots four kinds of sprouts shoot downwards. In this way the root of the world-tree gains its strength from the Supreme Self and bears tufts of sprouts downwards. This conscious Self first produces a tender leaf known as the Great Principle (*mahat*). Then is produced downward what is known as egoism with three leaves in the form of the three qualities, sattva, rajas and *tamas* (91-95). This egoism produces a second sprout in the form of intellect, which fosters the notion of distinctions. Then this gives moisture to the twig in the form of mind and makes it fresh. When the root becomes strong, it gives rise to four tender shoots of the mind full of the juice of ignorance. Then from them straight twigs in the form of five gross elements sky, wind, fire, water and earth issue- with great rapidity.

From the twigs in the form of gross elements arise fresh and tender variegated foliage in the form of the sense organs such as ears and their

objects. When the sprout in the form of sound grows, the organs of hearing grow in strength, giving rise to the sprouts of desire. (96-100). Then the creeper in the form of the body produces foliage in the form of skin, from which springs the sprout of touch. Giving rise to novel kinds of passions in profusion. Then is produced the foliage of form with sprouts in the form of eyes to view with, giving rise to infatuation. This is followed by foliage in the form of taste, giving rise to numerous desires for the tongue. Similarly, there comes a sprout of smell, intensifying the desires of the organ of smell and giving rise to fondness. In this way, the eightfold P*rakriti* consisting of mahat, egoism, intellect, mind and the five gross elements makes this world-tree to shoot up rapidly (101-105). But just as when the mother-of-pearl appears as silver. The silver takes on the same form as the mother-of-pearl, or the expanse of the waves is proportionate to the wide surface of the sea, so the Brahman itself becomes the tree in the form of mundane existence arising from ignorance. Just a person, though single, becomes his retinue in the dream, so this entire universe is the growth arid expanse of the Supreme Self. In this way, this curious tree grows and produces shoots in the form of mahat and other principles.

I shall now tell you why people call this tree *Ashvattha* (106-110). *Shva* means the morrow. This tree does not remain the same even until the morrow. Just as the hues of the cloud change every moment or the lightning does not last in its entirety even for a short while, or the water on a quivering lotus leaf or the mind of man in distress does not remain steady, so is the condition of this world-tree which perishes every moment. In popular parlance the people call this the holy fig tree, but Shri Hari does not use this word in this sense (111-115). However I had understood the true meaning, when this tree was called the *Ashvattha*. Now we need not be concerned with the popular sense of this word and so I proceed with this narration. In short, this tree is called *Ashvattha*, as it is transient. But this tree is also known as indestructible i.e. everlasting, its implied meaning is this. The sea evaporates to form the clouds and is replenished by the rivers flooded by the showers of rain and so remains full so long as the above process continues. (116-120). In the same way, the modifications in the tree take place so rapidly that people hardly perceive them. It is for this reason the people call it indestructible. Just as a munificent person gathers merit by giving his money in charity, so this world tree, undergo1ng decay every moment, still remains everlasting. Just as when the chariot moves very fast, its wheels seem to have no movement, so no sooner a branch of the world tree in the form of creatures withers up in course of time than it is replaced by numerous fresh sprouts. But no one knows when the branch drops down and when the numerous branches shoot up; in the same way as one does not know which clouds in the month of July come in the sky and which disappear (121-125). The branches of the world-tree fall off at the time of world-dissolution but they grow in abundance like a thick forest at the time of

creation. The barks of the tree get peeled off by the stormy winds at the time of world- dissolution, but they appear in tufts at the beginning of an epoch. Then one epoch (*Manvantara*) follows another, the solar and lunar dynasties expand in the same way as the sugarcane grows through its joints. At the end of the *kaliyuga*, all the barks which the world-tree had grown in the four *yugas* drop down, but it grows one and half times at the commencement of the *kritayuga*. Just as the current year ends and ushers in a new year, and one does not know when a day passes away, giving place to a new one (126-130), or one does not perceive the joints of breezes when they flow continuously, so one does not know how many branches grow on this tree and fall off. No sooner than a young shoot in the form of a body falls off than hundreds of such shoots grow on this tree. As a result, the world tree appears to be everlasting. As the water of the river current flows away very fast, it is followed by another so that the river appears to have a continuous flow, so this universe, though impermanent, appears to be permanent. Numerous ripples appear and disappear in the sea in a twinkling of the eye, and so they appear to be permanent. The crow with only one common eye-ball, moves it from one eye to the other so fast that it gives an erroneous impression that it has two eyes (131-135). When the top rotates very fast, its rapid motion gives the false impression that it is stationary and stuck to the ground. Why go far, if the firebrand is moved very fast round and round in darkness, it appears circular in shape. In the same way, the decomposition and growth of this world-tree takes place so fast simultaneously that the ordinary people do not perceive it and call it everlasting. But he who realises that this world-tree is momentary, that it grows and withers continuously in a moment and is false being rooted in ignorance (136-140). Such a man, O Arjuna, is all knowing, the knower of Vedanta doctrine and is the object of my adoration. He alone attains the fruit of Yoga and enlivens knowledge. Enough of this description. In this way, who can describe a person who knows that this world-tree is transitory?

2. *Up and down its branches spread, thriving on the gunas with sense-objects as its shoots; its routings spread downwards, resulting in actions in the human world.*

When the branches of this world-tree extend downwards and go into the ground, plenty of branches also shoot straight upwards. Those branches that go into the ground take root and produce creepers with foliage (141-145). What I told you in the beginning, I shall explain to you in clear terms for your easy comprehension. This world-tree is rooted in ignorance and from it has originated the eightfold *prakriti*, consisting of mahat etc. producing thick woods of Vedic knowledge. Then four shoots come out from the bottom of the tree, consisting of the four orders of living beings, born from sweat (S*vedaja*), from womb (j*araja*) from the soil (U*dbh jia*) and from eggs (*Andaja*). From each of these branches spring eighty-four lakhs

of species, each giving rise to an unlimited number of twigs in the form of beings. Those straight branches, which give rise to zigzag twigs, represent the different sub-species of beings. (146-150) These beings are then distinguished as male, female and neuter and they come across one another under the pressure of their changeful natures. Just as clouds crowd in the sky in the rainy season, so beings belonging to many species come to birth due to ignorance. Then the branches, bent down by the weight of their overgrowth, get entangled into one another and the winds in the form of the excitement of the qualities (*gunas*) begin to blow violently. As a result of the weird blasts of winds in the form of those excited *gunas*; the world-tree, with roots up, splits into three parts. When the wind of rajas quality starts blowing violently, the branch representing the human order begins to grow rapidly (151-155). This shoot does not produce branches upwards or downwards, but gives rise to four branches in the middle i. e. in the mortal world. The branches bear fresh foliage of Vedic dicta and leaves in the form of Vedic injunctions and prohibitions. Then the two aims of human life, viz. the acquisition of riches and desire spread out, giving rise to sprouts of transient happiness in this world. Thereafter-countless sprouts of good and bad actions issue forth to promote human activity. With the expiation of the former Karma, the withered branches in the form of bodies fall down, and then new branches spring up in the form of new bodies (156-160). And then there issues a continuous crop of fresh foliage in the form of speech etc. glittering in their natural and beautiful colours. Thus when the strong wind of rajas quality begins to blow, the branch in the form of the human order begins to grow fast, and so the human world becomes properly established.

When the wind in the form of rajas quality subsides, then the stormy wind in the form of the *tamas* begins to blow forcibly. Then the foliage of wicked desires issues forth from the branches in the form of the human order, giving rise to twigs of evil actions. Then rough branches in the form of immoral ways begin to grow, producing twigs and leaves in the form of heedlessness (161-165). Thereafter the branches in the form of precepts and prohibitions in the Rigveda, Yajurveda and Samaveda give rise to foliage at their tips. Then the branch puts forth a leaf in the form of the scripture, which lays down black magic causing great harm to others, on which thrives the creeper of desires. As the roots of the evil actions get strengthened, then the branches in the form of rebirths multiply fast. Thereafter the world-tree produces a big branch in the form of low castes, in which those who are lured by the evil actions become lax in the performance of their religious duties. Then many oblique branches issue forth in the form of animals such as beasts, birds, pigs, -tigers, scorpions and serpents (166-170). Thus fresh branches are produced, O Pandava, from every part of this world-tree and they bear fruits of hellish sufferings. The sensual pleasures also involve violence and they bear a branch in the form of evil actions. On its top grow similar sprouts, which give rise to

branches such as trees, grass, iron, earth and stones and these branches too bear similar fruits. O Arjuna, bear in mind that all branches from human beings to inanimate things have only a downward growth.

Therefore, the branch of the human order is the origin of all these branches spreading downwards and from it grows this tree of mundane existence. (171-175) If you wish to know the source of the branches going up, you will find that this branch in the form of human order is midway between the branches going up and down. The branches in the form of evil and virtuous actions arising from the tamas, rajas and sattava spread downwards and upwards. O Arjuna, the leaves in the form of the three Vedas does not apply to anyone except the human order. So even though this branch in the form of human order has sprung from the top root, the resolve to perform actions arises from this branch. All other trees grow in such a way that when their branches spread, their roots go deep and vice versa (176-180). The same is the case of this human body. As long as actions are performed, the human body lasts, and as long as the body is there, there is no end to actions. So the human body is the fruit of the branches in the form of actions and there is no pause in this, so said the Lord of the world.

(The Lord further added) : when the hurricane of the *tamas* quality subsides, then the stormy wind of the *sattva* quality begins to blow. Then this root in the form of the human order produces sprouts in the form of good desires and shoots of knowledge. Then with the growth of this knowledge spring twigs in the form of sharp intelligence and they expand in the twinkling of the eye (181-185). When this twig in the form of intelligence spreads, it gains through the strength of inspiration the power of discrimination. Then there issue fourth beautiful leaves in the form of faith, full of the juice of acute intelligence giving rise to straight sprouts of good manners. and Vedic chants. Then they bear many leaves in the form of behaviour according to Vedic precepts and many kinds of sacrificial rites. From these spring the branches in the form of austerities which bear bunches of self-control and restraint of the senses and beautiful tender twigs in the form of non-attachment (186-190). The shoots of special kinds of vows come forth from the sharp sprout of fortitude and spread rapidly upward. So long as the stormy wind of the sattva quality blows, twigs in the form of lore's spring from the thick foliage of the Vedas. Then a straight twig in the form, of duty (*dharma*) spreads and produces a cross-branch which yields the fruit of sojourn in heaven etc. A red branch in the form of non-attachment produces fresh foliage in the form of liberation. Then the side shoots in the form of planets such as the sun and the moon, and the abodes of manes, seers, semi-divine *vidyadharas* (learned demi-gods) begin to sprout (191-195). Higher than these another branch springs up, bearing fruits like the heaven of Indra. This branch produces high twigs in the form of *Marichi*, *Kashyapa* etc. Who are foremost in austerities

and knowledge. So these branches spread one over the other, laden with abundant fruits so that the tree is slender at the bottom and heavy at the top. On the top of these branches other sprouts spring in the form of the world of god Brahma and *Kailasa*, the world of Lord Shiva. Then with the weight of their fruits the higher branches fold over and rest on the roots (196-200). as in the case of ordinary trees. Similarly, O Arjuna, with the growth of knowledge, this world-tree rests on its roots. There is, therefore, no scope of further growth of beings beyond regions of god Brahman and Lord Shiva and there is - only Brahman beyond these heights. But apart from this, the branches of god Brahma etc. cannot compare with the world-tree. Higher than these are the branches in the form of sages Sanaka etc. treading the path of renunciation, which are without fruits and roots and so have become one with Brahman (201-205). In this manner the branches in the form of Brahmaloka have gone higher up from the branches of the human order. They have sprung from the branches of the human order, which form their roots. In this way, I have described this marvelous tree in the form of mundane existence, which has roots at the top (i.e. Brahman) and has its spread both upwards and downwards. I have also explained in detail the roots of this world tree, which are down below. I shall now tell you how this tree can be uprooted, listen.

3. *Its form as such is not known here, nor its end nor its source nor its foundation. Cutting down this deep-rooted Ashvattha tree, with the mighty sword of non-attachment,*

   O Partha, a doubt may arise in your mind whether there is any means by which such a huge tree could be uprooted (206-210)? What would be able to fell down such a vast and strong tree, of which the top branches have spread upto the world of god Brahma, of which the roots are in the formless Brahman, of which the branches at the base have gone deep into the earth and of which the branches in the middle have formed the human life? Do not entertain any such doubt. You will have no trouble in cutting down this tree. Is it necessary to drive away the goblin in order to remove the child's fright? Does it become necessary to pull down the forts formed 'by the clouds or to break the horn of a hare or pluck the flower of the sky (211-215)? In the same way, O Arjuna, this world-tree is unreal, so why does one need boldness to eradicate it? The description of the roots and branches of this tree is like saying that a barren woman has given birth to many children. Could a talk in a dream be of any use in the waking state? The story of this tree is as superfluous as such a dream-talk. Had the roots of this tree been as strong as I had described it, which mother's son could have uprooted it? Can anyone scatter the sky by puffing at it (216-220)? The world-tree as described by me is all an illusion like the ghee prepared from the tortoise's (non-existent) milk. O dear friend, lakes of mirage water are fit to be seen only from a distance; can anyone grow rice

or bananas on that water? Where the ignorance itself is unreal, how could its effect be real? Truly speaking, this world tree is a mere illusion.

This tree is said to be endless, and in one sense it is true. Can there be an end to sleep so long as one does not wake up or could there be a dawn, until the night is over (221-225)? In the same way, O Partha, so long as knowledge does not dawn upon one, there could be no end to this world-tree. The waves on the sea do not cease, so long as the wind does not stop blowing. The mirage disappears only after the sun-sets or the light vanishes when the lamp is extinguished. In the same way, this world tree which is rooted in ignorance does not vanish until the dawn of knowledge. So when it is said that this world has no beginning, it is not a false imputation, but is a fact, which accords with its nature (226-230). For if the world-tree is not real, how could it have a beginning? It would be reasonable to ascribe origin to a thing, which is produced; but how could there be a beginning for a thing which has no existence at all? Who could be the mother of an unborn child? In the same way the world tree is said to be beginningless, as it has no existence. How could there be a horoscope of a child of a barren woman? How could one imagine the existence of blue colour in the sky? Could anyone break the stalk of the flower of the sky? So how could the world-tree have a beginning when it does not exist (231-235)? The earthen pitcher has no existence before it is made, so is this entire world-tree without beginning.

This is how, O Arjuna, this tree has neither beginning nor end and its intermediate state is also illusory. Though (like the river Godavari) it starts from the Brahmagiri, (mountain of Brahman) it does not join the sea, but is like a mirage in the middle. So it has neither a beginning nor an end nor is it real in any state. But see how marvelous it is! Although unreal, it seems real. Like a multicoloured rainbow, this world-tree appears charming to an ignorant person (236-240). The world-tree, by its illusory appearance, deludes the vision of an ignorant person like a skilful actor who attracts the minds of people by assuming different roles. The sky appears to be blue although it is devoid of colour, but the colour appears blue for a moment, and then vanishes. If the unreal things seen in a dream are held to be real, is it possible to maintain oneself on them? In the same way this world appearance is momentary and without real substance. Though it appears as real, one cannot grasp it, just as a monkey, which sees its reflection in the water, cannot catch hold of it. The world comes into being and perishes so fast that it surpasses the quick movements of the ripples in the sea or of the lightning in the sky (241-245). Just as one does not know whether the last winds in the summer blow from the front or the rear, so is the state of this unreal world-tree. Does one need to make strenuous efforts to uproot this tree, which is without beginning, end, continuity or form? Did not this tree become strong because of man's ignorance of his true Self? One should therefore fell it down by means of Self-knowledge. If

you make use of remedies other than this knowledge, you will become more and more entangled in this tree. How long can you go up and down the branches of this tree? So cut down the branches of this tree and cut down its root which is ignorance by true knowledge of the Self (246-250). Otherwise it would be like gathering sticks to kill the (illusory) serpent imagined in e rope or getting drowned in a real forest stream while running in search of a boat to cross the mirage. Oh warrior, while one devises means for destroying this world-tree, one deprived of Self-knowledge becomes possessed of the notion that the world affairs are real. O winner of wealth, just as the walking state is the only way to get rid of a wound caused in a dream, so one needs the sword of knowledge to cut the root of world-tree which is ignorance. In order to wield this sword of knowledge without effort, the intelligence needs the constant support of non-attachment (251-255). When this non- attachment becomes firm, it goes beyond righteousness, acquisition of riches and passion, in the way a dog vomits foul food consumed by it. O Arjuna, when one forms a loathing for every 'object, this non-attachment grows strong. Then one should take out the sword of knowledge from its sheath in the form of body-consciousness and hold it firmly in the hand in the form of intellect which is looking inwards. Then after rubbing this sword on the whetstone of discrimination, it should be sharpened and cleaned on the notion "I am Brahman." Then holding this sword in one's Arm grip of resolve, one should brandish it once or twice and then balance it in his hand on the strength 'of reflection (256-260). When the wielder of the weapon becomes one' with the weapon, there is nothing in the world Which can with- stand its onslaught. That sword of the Self-knowledge will then, by means of its splendour of non-dualism, not allow the world- tree to exist anywhere. Just as at the start of autumn the wind clears the sky of all clouds or as the rising sun destroys all darkness, or as the waking state ends the confused state of the mind in a dream, so the sharpened edge of the sword of knowledge does its work. Then as the mirage disappears in the moon-light, the upper and lower roots of the world-tree and the expansion of its branches cease to exist (261-265). Therefore, O best of warriors, you should cut down this top-rooted *Ashvattha* tree by means of the sword of Self-knowledge.

4. *Then they seek that abode, by reaching which they do not return. I seek refuge in that Primeval Person, from whom has sprung this ancient world-process.*

   Then they should realise the Self which cannot be referred to as 'this' or 'that' and which destroys the ego. But you should refrain from the notion of duality which the fools entertain by looking into the mirror. You should view this Self in such a way as the water springs remain intact even when the well is filled up or as the sun's reflection returns to the original disc when the water in which- it is reflected dries up, or as the space in the earthen pot merges in the sky when the pot breaks (266-270) or as the fire

becomes extinguished when the fuel is burnt up. One should scrutinize one's Self as the tongue tastes itself or the eye sees its eye-ball. Just as splendour merges in itself, as the sky rolls on itself, or the water remains in water, I declare that one should view oneself with a non-dual vision. That primeval abode which is to be seen without seeing or known without knowing is known as the Primeval Person (271-275). The Vedas describe him with the help of limiting conditions (upadhis) and raise a noisy clamour in vain that he has name and form. But those who are tired of heavenly and worldly pleasures take a vow that they would never return to this world and resort to yoga and knowledge. Then becoming indifferent to the world they lay a wager to turn their back on mundane existence and even go beyond the abode of god Brahma, which is attainable through the way of action. (276-280). Then after getting rid of egoism, they obtain an extra pass for entering their original home. As the snow freezes itself, one should view the essential nature of one's Self, because of which the world sequence is expanding like the vain hope of a luckless person. Without knowing this one views the world appearance with a false notion of duality in the form of "You" and "I". O winner of wealth, there is another sign by which one can recognise it. It is this that after the realisation of the Self, they are not reborn in this world. It is only those who are completely saturated with the knowledge of the Self as the world is brimful with water at the time of the deluge, attain to the Supreme Self.

5. *Without pride and delusion, triumphant over the flaw of attachment, immersed in the Self after becoming freed from desires and the pairs of opposites, viz., pleasure and pain, they, undeluded, attain to that eternal abode.*

   Just as clouds clear out of the sky at the close of the rainy season, so delusion and egoism leave such persons. (281-285) Just as relations get tired of a poor and cruel person and desert him, they do not get into the clutches of emotions. Just as a plantain tree topples down after bearing bananas, so with the realisation of the Self, their activities slowly come to a stop. Just as birds fly away from a tree which has caught fire all fancies leave them and go away. They do not even become aware of the notion of duality, which produces sprouts of grass in the form of shortcomings in the Field. Just as darkness disappears with dawn, their body-consciousness leaves them along with ignorance (286-290). Just as the body drops down with the expiry of the life span, so the notion of duality which causes infatuation leaves them. Just as a philosopher's stone cannot acqu1re iron or the sun cannot come across darkness, so there is total absence of the sense of duality in them. The pair of opposites viz., pleasures and pain, which is seen in connection with the body does not affect them. Just as the acquisition of a kingdom or meeting with death in a dream do not cause delight or sorrow in the waking state, or the eagle is never caught by a serpent, so the pair of pleasure and pain which give rise to merit and

sin does not affect them. (291-295). These thoughtful persons are like swans who consume the milk of Self-knowledge after separating it from the water in the form of not-Self. Just as the sun sends showers of rain to the earth and absorbs it through his rays (by the process of evaporation), so the supreme Self which had seemingly become scattered into different directions becomes consolidated into the vision of Self. Their thoughts become firmly grounded in the Supreme Self, as the flow of the river Ganges becomes merged in the sea. Just as the sky does not shift from one place to another, so when these men of wisdom become one with the Supreme Self, they do not entertain any desires (296-300). Like the seeds which do not grow on a volcano, passions do not arise in their minds. Just as the sea of milk became calm after the churning rod in the form of Mandara was removed from it, so the ripples of desire do not agitate their minds. Like the full moon, which remains complete in all its sixteen phases lacking nothing, they are not troubled by hope. How much more can I, describe to you such incomparable things about them? Just as the particles of earth cannot stand a (stormy) wind, so they do not like the sense-objects even mentioned before them. Those who have sacrificed the sense-objects in the Are of kno4rledge merge in that abode, as purified gold unites with pure gold (301-305). If you ask what is that abode in which they merge, it is that abode which never perishes, and which is not an object to be seen or known or in any way particularised.

6. *The sun does not illumine it, nor the moon nor the fire; after going where men return not; that is my supreme abode.*

This abode is not such that it can be seen in the light of the lamp or of the moon or even of the sun. When the supreme Brahman hides itself, the world appearance becomes manifest. So long as the knowledge of the shell remains deficient, the shell appears in the form of silver or when the knowledge of the rope ceases, its serpent form becomes more apparent (306-310). So it is only when the light of the supreme Self is concealed that the luminaries such as the sun and the moon illumine the world with their brilliant splendour. This supreme Brahman is so effulgent and all-pervasive that it lends its light to the sun and the moon, so much so that the light of the sun and moon seems to be its reflected light. The essential nature of this supreme Self is such that it bestows its splendour on all luminous things. The whole universe along with the sun and the moon vanishes in the light of that Supreme Being. Just as the moon and the stars disappear on the rising of the sun, or the scenes in the dream disappear on waking up or the mirage vanishes when the evening sets in (311-315), so in that supreme abode of mine, the world appearance does not survive. Those who reach my abode never return like the river which has joined the sea. Just as the salt- statuette of a female elephant immersed in the sea never returns or the flames which rise up in the sky do not come down, or the water sprinkled on the red hot iron dries up

without leaving a trace, they become one with me on the strength of pure knowledge and do not come to birth again (316-320).

Then Arjuna, the prince of knowledge, said, "Oh Lord, you have indeed bestowed your grace on me. But I have a request to make, please give it due consideration. As for those who become merged in the Supreme Being, never to return to this mortal world, were they originally distinct from him or were they non-different from him? If they were distinct from time without beginning, then to say that they do not return, strikes me as inconsistent. How can the bees which go to sip the honey in the flowers become themselves flowers at any time? Similarly, the arrows after hitting the targets drop down and so come back. If on the other they were always non-different from you, then who meets whom? For how can a weapon pierce itself (321-325)? If the individual selves are not different from you, then one cannot talk about their union with you or separation from you in the same way as one cannot talk about the body being different from its organs. If they are all different from you, they can never become one with you. Is it not therefore, futile to raise the question whether they return to this world or not? Therefore, enlighten me. Oh omnifaced God, as to how they do not come back after attaining you."

Hearing this query of Arjuna, the omniscient Lord became pleased, seeing that Arjuna had attained full wisdom. Then the Lord said, those who attain to me and do not return to this world can be said to be both distinct and non-distinct from me (326-330).' If you think deeply, you will realise that they are one with me; but outwardly they seem to be distinct from me. The ripples on the water appear distinct from it, but they are nothing but water. The gold ornaments appear different from gold; yet if you consider them properly they are all gold. In that way, O Arjuna, if you view it with the vision, of wisdom, they have become one with me; but they appear to be distinct due to ignorance. If you think of me as the Supreme Self, how can you entertain notions of distinction and non-disjunction from me, who am single (331-335)? If the sun's disc were to pervade the whole sky, where can ft have, its reflection and where can it send its rays? O winner of wealth, can there be anything like ebb and tide, when the whole world is covered with water at the time of deluge? How could there be parts In me who am one and immutable? But because of its currents the water, though straight, appears curved. Or when the sun is reflected in water, there seem to be two suns. How can you say that the space is square or round in form, but it appears to be so when it is enclosed in the earthen pot or a *Matha (hermitage)*. When man dreams that he is a king, does he not constitute the entire world in the dream and pervade it (336-340)? When an alloy is mixed with gold, the combination is known as gold of different carrots; so even though I am pure, I appear to be distinct as Self and God due to the limiting factor (*upadhi*) of Maya. Then only ignorance spreads

all round and the doubt arises in the form of 'Who am I?' and after a good deal of (confused) thought one thinks, 'I am the body.'

7. *A part of Myself becomes the eternal Self in the world of beings and draws (to itself) the (five) senses with the mind as the sixth, abiding in the prakriti.*

   In this way, the knowledge of Self gets solely confined to the body and because of its smallness it appears as a part of myself. When a ripple is formed on the sea as a result of a breeze, it appears to be a part of the sea. In the same way, though I give consciousness and egoism to the inert body, I appear as the individual Self in this body (341-345). The activity that appears to go round due to the intellect of the embodied Self is known as the world of the living (*jivaloka).* Where birth and death are regarded as real, I call that the world of the living or mundane existence. Just as the moon, though different from water, is reflected in the water, so I exist in this world of the living. If a crystal is placed on red- powder, it appears red but in reality it is not so. In the same way my original nature as beginningless and inactive remains unaffected.

   If I appear to be the doer and the experience, know that it is due to delusion (346-350). In short, this pure Self coming into conjunction with the *Prakriti* attributes its properties to himself. Then he regards the mind and the senses, which are the products of the *Prakriti*, as his own and becomes involved in worldly affairs. Just as a monk becomes his own family in a dream and, becoming infatuated, exerts himself to maintain it, so the Self, forgetting his essential nature, takes himself to be the body, and dances attendance on it. Then he rides in the chariot of the mind and passing out through the ears, he enters the woods of speech (351-355). When he holds on to the apron of *Prakriti*, he goes through the door of skin into the thick forest in the form of touch. Sometimes he comes out through the door of the eyes, and roams freely on the mountain of form. O warrior, he passes out through the passage of the tongue and wanders in the valley of taste. Or when this part of myself comes out through the exit of the nose, he roves in the dense forest of smell. In this way taking the help of the mind, the embodied Self, who is the lord of the body and the senses, enjoys the sense-objects such as the sound (356-360).

8. *When the Lord (the Self) acquires a body and also when he abandons it, he departs taking these with him as the wind (carries) fragrance from its source.*

   When this embodied Self enters the body, he thinks that he is the doer and experiencer. Just as, O winner of wealth, a rich and pleasure-loving person is recognised when he settles down in the capital city, so when the embodied Self takes on his body, his ego gains strength and his senses

and their objects become turbulent. Or when he departs from the body, he takes along with him the retinue of the senses. Just as a dishonoured guest carries with him the merit of his host, or with the snapping of the string the movements of the puppets cease (361-365), or when the sun sets he takes away the vision of the people or when the wind blows it carries away the fragrance, so O Dhananjaya, when the embodied Self discards the body, he takes with himself the five organs of knowledge and the sixth organ, the mind.

9. *Preciding over the organs of hearing, sight, touch, taste and smell and the mind, this (embodied Self) enjoys the objects of the senses.*

   Whether he remains in this world or goes to the next world after assuming a body, he takes with himself this group of senses including the mind. O Arjuna, when a lamp is extinguished, it takes away the light, but when it is relit, it brings back the light and spreads it; the ignorant think that this is what happens in the case of the embodied Self (366-370). They think that the Self really entered the body and left after enjoying the sense-objects. But coming and going, doing and enjoying are all the properties of *Prakriti*; but men ascribe them to the Self.

10. *The deluded do not see him departing or staying (in the body) or enjoying, as he is endowed with gunas; but those with the eye of wisdom see him.*
11. *The yogis, exerting themselves, see him existing in themselves; but the thoughtless do not see him, being of unformed minds, even if they try very hard.*

    When the embodied Self begins his movements, then we say that the Self has entered his body and that he is born. When the senses, through their association with the embodied Self, savour of the sense-objects, this is called his experience. When the child grows old and the body becomes emaciated and lifeless, then the people lament that the Self has departed (371-375). Should one understand that the wind blows only if a tree is fluttering and that it does not exist where there is no tree? Should a person think that he exists only when he sees his reflection in the mirror and not before? And when the mirror is set aside and the reflection is gone, should he decide that he has ceased to exist? Even though the sound is a property of the akasha, people ascribe the thunder of lightning to the clouds or they attribute the movement of the cloud to the moon. So persons blinded by infatuation superpose the birth and death of the body upon the Self (376-380). But there are some persons who know that the Self abides in the body and witnesses only the functions of the body. They regard the body with the eye of wisdom as the mere sheath of the Self and not get entangled in it. Such men of knowledge in whom the discrimination has spread like the scorch4ng rays of the sun in the summer are enlightened as regards the essential nature of the Self. When the sky

studded with stars becomes reflected in the sea, then surely it has not dropped down into the sea. The sky remains where it is and its reflection in the sea is a mere illusion. So that which abides in the body is the Self only (381-385). Though the reflection of the moonlight oscillates in the roaring currents of water and gives the impression of a being divided into parts, the light remains in the moon all the same. The sun's reflection appears in the puddle and disappears when it becomes dry; yet the sun remains unaffected where it is. In the same way, men of knowledge know that the Self abides when the body remains or ceases to exist. Even when an earthen pot and a hermitage are constructed and destroyed, the space in it remains as it is; in the same way, the Self remains changeless. The enlightened men know that the bodies conceived through ignorance come into being and perish. The Self does not increase or diminish, he does not do work nor get it done. In this way the men of knowledge know me truly.

But even if a man attains this knowledge, possesses keen intellect to penetrate through atom and becomes proficient in all *lores*, but is lacking in non-attachment, he will not attain to me, the all-pervading one. Even if he talks *glibely* about discrimination, but at the same time entertains thoughts of sense-objects in his mind, he will definitely not attain to me. By repeating in sleep the texts read by him, will he ' able to break the bonds of worldly existence? Can one be said to have read a book, if he merely touches it? Or if one's eyes are bandaged, will one be able to assess the worth of a set of pearls by putting it to one's nose (391-395)? In that way, even if one has all the scriptures at the tip of one's tongue, one will never attain to me, so long as one's heart is full of egoism. Now, I shall explain how, though single, I pervade the whole universe.

12. *That light pertaining to the sun, which illumines the entire world, and that which is in the moon and in the fire know that the light is Mine.*

    Know that all that light which illumines the world, inclusive of the sun's, belongs to me and remains with me from the beginning to the end of the world. When the sun dries up the world (through the process of' evaporation), the moon-light that provides moisture to the world is also mine. And the intense heat in the Are, which burns and cooks etc., also belongs to me (396-400).

13. *Entering the earth, I sustain all beings with My power and I nourish all the herbs, becoming soma (moon) full of juices.*

    I permeate the earth, so that even though it is a mass of clay, it does not dissolve in the waters of the ocean. I also enter the earth and uphold the countless beings, both animate and inanimate, sustained by it. I have become the moving lake of nectar in the form of the moon in the sky. And when the moon-beams come down from the sky, I turn them into channels

of nectar and nourish the plants. In this way, by providing food crops in abundance, I sustain the life of all beings (401- 405). Even after the food is produced, it has to be digested otherwise how could the living being get satisfaction after eating it?

14. *Having become the abdominal fire, I live in the bodies of all creatures; and united with the inward and outward breaths, I digest the four kinds of food.*

Therefore, O Arjuna, I become the digestive fire which is kindled at - the region of the navel. By blowing the bellows in the form of inward and outward breath, I consume unlimited quantities of food. I digest four kinds of food viz., dry, oily, cooked and half- cooked. In this way, I am the entire world of beings, also the food which sustains them and I am also the Are, which is the principal means of digestion (406-410). How much more can I describe to you the novelty of my pervasion? There is nothing in this world without me and I have pervaded the whole of it.

Now you will ask me why some beings in this world are happy and some are afflicted with misery. If the lamps in a town are lit by one' and the same lamp will it happen that some of them give light and some not? If you entertain such doubts, I shall clear them completely. See I am everywhere and there is nothing without me. But I appear different to living beings according to their discerning power (411-415). Even if sound is the quality of the sky, we hear different tunes from different musical instruments. The sun rises and helps the people to go about their different occupations. The seeds with different properties grow into different trees. In the same way, my essential nature is transformed into differing beings. If an ignorant and a wise person both see a double-braided necklace of sapphires, the ignorant one takes it to be a serpent, while the wise one feels happy with the knowledge that it is a necklace. The raindrop turns into a pearl when it falls into an oyster under the asterism of Swati, but it becomes poison when it falls into the mouth of a serpent. In the same way, -I become the cause of happiness to the wise, but the cause of misery to the ignorant (416-420).

15. *I dwell in the hearts of all; from Me spring memory, knowledge and reason. I alone am the object of knowledge of all the Vedas; I am the author of Vedanta and also the knower of the Vedas.*

The consciousness that "I am somebody" which throbs day and night in the heart of everyone is myself. But when his ignorance is removed by the company of saints, the pursuit of yoga and knowledge and the service of the preceptor with non-attachment, his egoism becomes merged in the Self. Such a person comes to know me thoroughly and becomes happy with that knowledge. What other reason can he have except myself in attaining that state? O Dhananjaya, just as the sun can be perceived only

when the sun rises, so I am myself the cause of my own knowledge (42l-425). On the other hand, those who are engrossed in pampering the body and in hearing the praise of worldly affairs, and whose egoism is, therefore, bound with the body. they pursue the path of action in order to attain happiness here as also in heaven and have misery as their lot. But, O Arjuna, I am also the cause of this state of theirs, just as what we see in the wakeful state becomes the cause of dreams in the state of sleep. Just as the cloudy sky, which makes the light dim, is also seen in that light, so the diversion of their attention to the sense objects on account of their ignorance of me also arises from me. O winner of wealth, as ignorance is the cause of the wakeful state and sleep, so I am the root cause of the knowledge and ignorance of living beings (426- 430). Just as the rope is the cause of its illusory appearance as the serpent or its true knowledge, so I am the root cause of knowledge and ignorance which is the basis of worldly existence. Therefore, O Dhananjaya, not knowing my essential nature, the Vedas made an attempt to know me, giving rise to a number of different schools. Yet they all impart knowledge in regard to myself, as all rivers going East or West ultimately join the sea. Just as the fragrant breeze stops in the sky, so the Vedas are reduced to nonplus when they come across the great utterance, 'I am myself the great Brahman'. In this way, when the scriptures become dumb out of shame, I help them to reveal the nature of Brahman (431-435).

I am the knower of that pure knowledge, in which the world along with the scriptures becomes merged. Just as when a person wakes up from sleep, he knows that all things which he saw in a dream were not different from him but that he himself had become them, so I know My non-dual nature, which is free from the limiting conditions of the world and I am myself the cause of its realisation. O Arjuna, when the camphor gets burnt, it leaves neither soot nor fire, so the knowledge after destroying ignorance ceases and no one can definitely say that it exists or ceases (436-440). Who can trace the thief and where, who takes away the universe without leaving any trail? Then what remains is the state. which is myself. In this way, while describing how he had pervaded the animate and inanimate world, the Lord, the giver of salvation, preached his pure state which is free from limiting conditions. Just as on the rise of the moon in the sky, its full reflection appears in the sea, so the teaching of the Lord became impressed on the mind of Arjuna. As the picture on a wall becomes reflected in the opposite wall, which has been polished and made glossy, so the knowledge, which was imparted by Lord Krishna, penetrated the mind of Arjuna. It is a wonder that the more one attains knowledge of the Supreme Self, the more he feels attracted to it (441-445).

Then Arjuna, the prince among those who have realised the Self, said, "O Lord, please repeat fully whatever description you gave of the formless Supreme in the course of explaining your pervasive nature". Then the king

of *Dvaraka* said, "You have asked a pertinent question. O Arjuna, I also like to speak on this subject but what can I do? One seldom comes across someone who asks questions like this. But you questioned me on this point freely. So you have fulfilled my desire and brought me happiness arising from the experience of non-dualism (446-450). I have found in you as a good conversationalist as myself, like seeing my own form reflected in the mirror. O dear Arjuna, you never ask a question in ignorance so that I shall explain this thing in a way, which will convince you. Saying this, the ' Lord embraced Arjuna and viewing him with favour said, "Although there are two lips, the speech which comes out of them is the same. Although there are two pairs of feet, yet the act of walking is the same. Of the same type is your question to me and my reply to you. In fact, both of us should have the same purpose, as both of us, one who asks and one who replies are one and the same (451-455)." While speaking this, the Lord became infatuated with affection and clasping Arjuna to his heart remained still. Then with some trepidation he said to himself, " Such an affection on my part is not proper. While preparing *jaggery* from sugarcane juice, salt is added to it to prevent it from being spoiled, so if I do not maintain this distinction between us, then we shall miss this pleasure of conversation. As it is, there is no distinction between us, as we were formerly Nara and Narayana and so I must allow this effusion of affection to subside". Thinking thus, he asked, "O Arjuna, what did you ask me?" Hearing these words, Arjuna, who was on the point of merging his personality into that of the Lord, regained his consciousness and became ready to hear his reply (456-460). With a choked throat (through an excess of emotion), he said, "O Lord, tell me about your attributeless form."

The Lord began his reply by describing two kinds of limiting conditions (*upadhis*). You may wonder as to why the Lord talked about the limiting conditions, when he was requested to explain the attributeless form. It is like this. One cannot recover butter without separating the butter-milk from milk, or get pure gold without burning its alloy. One cannot reach pure water without setting aside the moss or get a clear sky without the scattering away of clouds (461-465). Is there any difficulty in recovering the grain once the husk is removed? In the same way, it hardly needs telling that what remains after removing the limiting conditions is the attributeless form of the Self. Just as a lady from a good family indicates by keeping quiet that the name uttered by a person is the name of her husband, so where the scriptures remain mute, that is the indescribable pure form of the Supreme Self. In order to indicate that this form is inexpressible, the Lord of goddess Lakshmi has started with a description of the limiting conditions. Just as one has to point out the tiny moon's arc on the first day after the new moon night against the background of a branch of a tree, one has to discuss the limiting conditions in order to explain the attributeless form of the Supreme Self (466-470).

16. *There are two purusha in the world, the perishable and the imperishable. The perishable comprises all creatures, the changeless is the imperishable (Self).*

Then the Lord said, O ambidextrous Arjuna, the population of this town in the form of mundane existence consists of only two *purusha*. Both these live in the capital of the world as both light and darkness dwell in the sky. There is also a third *purusha*, but he does not tolerate these two and when he arrives he immediately devours both of them along with the world. Leave this for the time being. First, hear about those two who have come to dwell in this town in the form of worldly existence. One of them is blind, crazy and lame, and the other has all his organs fully developed. They come into close association with one another-, as they dwell in the same city (471-475). One of them is known as 'perishable' and other is 'imperishable.' The worldly existence is entirely filled .by these two. Now, I shall explain to you what this 'perishable' entity is and what the characteristics are of the 'imperishable '. O winner of wealth, that which is great and small right from the Great Principle to the blade of grass, which is animate and the inanimate, which is comprehended by the mind and the body, which springs from the five gross elements and takes on name and form, which issues from the mint of the three gunas (476-480), which is the metal from which the coins in the form of beings are minted, which is the money with which the Time (Kala) gambles, which is known through false knowledge, which comes into being and becomes dissolved every moment, which enters the forest of delusion and produces the form of creation, in short, that is known as the 'World'. This has been described as the eightfold prakriti (in the Seventh Chapter) and as the Field (in the Thirteenth Chapter), made up of thirty-six principles. What is the sense in repeating what has already been stated? I have now described it to you in the form of a tree (481-485). Conscious Self regards this world as its dwelling place and takes on its form. Just as a lion after seeing his reflection in the well mistakes it for another lion and leaps into the well in anger, or the sky, remaining where it is, throws its reflection in water, so this conscious Self although non-dual, becomes enveloped by dualism. In this way, the conscious Self takes a fancy for this city in the form of the world and forgetful of its original nature, goes to sleep therein. Just as one sees a bed and sleeps on it in a dream, so the Self goes to sleep in that city (486-490). Then he says while snoring that he is happy or miserable and raves about with words such as 'me' and 'mine'. He says, "this is my father, this my mother, I am fair, I am dark, I am perfect; this son, riches and wife, are they not mine?" When the Self dreams like this and roams in the forest of the earth and heaven, he is known as the perishable purusha. Now when the one who is called as the owner of the Field (Kshetrajna) remains in the state of the embodied Self {jiva) and forgetting his essential nature as Self behaves like other beings, he is known as the perishable purusha (491-495). For since his Selfhood is not affected (by his

assumption of the body), he gets properly the name of purusha. As he abides in the body (which is like a town, pur) he is called purusha and since he becomes associated with the limiting conditions (upadhi), he is falsely accused of being non- eternal. Just as the moon appears to be moving when reflected in the ripples of water, so the self appears to be perishable because of his association with the limiting conditions. But when that water dries up, the reflection of the moon disappears and in the same way with the destruction of the limiting conditions, the Self remains in his pristine form. It is because of his association with the transitory limiting conditions, he got the name *kshara* i.e. perishable (496-500). In this way, all embodied selves should be called 'perishable.'

Now, I shall disclose to you the characteristics of the imperishable Self. O Arjuna, this other imperishable Self is situated in the middle and does not get involved in either knowledge or ignorance, as the *Meru* mountain stands perpetually in the three worlds, the earth, the nether world and heaven. True knowledge does not affect his unity nor does he suffer dualism because of false knowledge. The state of unknowing which is in between these two states is his nature. When the particles of earth change into a lump of wet clay, it ceases to be earth, but has not yet assumed the form of a pitcher. pot etc; so this imperishable *purusha* stands midway like this wet lump (501-505). O Partha, know that his nature is like the formless state of the sea, which becomes dried and has neither waves nor water or like the drowsy state which is in between the wakeful and dreamy states. This state of unknowing which is midway between the disappearance of the illusory world and the dawn of the knowledge of the Self is called the imperishable *purusha*. There is total absence of knowledge in this state like the moon which is stripped of all its phases on the New Moon night. With the ripening of the fruit, the tree is contained in it in the seed form (506-510); in the same way when all the limiting conditions are destroyed, that state in which the embodied Self along with his limiting conditions becomes merged is known as the 'Unmanifest' (*avyakta*). In the state of deep sleep (*sushupti*), there is total ignorance and so this state is known as the seed-state (*bijabhava*) and the states of wakefulness and dream are known as the fruit-state (*bijaphalabhava*). That which is known as the seed-state in Vedanta is the abode of that imperishable *purusha*. It produces false knowledge, which giving rise to wakeful and dream states, roams in the forest of many fancies. O Arjuna, that state from which consciousness creates the entire world and where its manifest and *unmanifest* states meet is the imperishable Self (511-515). The perishable Self assumes a body and experiences the states of wakeful and dreaming states. That from which these two states originate is the state full of ignorance known as the state of deep sleep (*sushupti*), which is only lacking in the knowledge of Brahman. O great warrior if this state of deep sleep had not given rise to the wakeful state and dream, then it would have been designated as the

state of Brahman. But two clouds in the form of *prakriti* and *purusha* come in the sky in the form of deep sleep, which witnesses the Field and the knower of the Field in the state of dream. This imperishable Self is the root cause of this expanding tree in the form of this mundane existence (516-520). But why is this perfect Self known as *purusha*? Because he goes to sleep in the city of Maya. That state of his in which one does not experience the whirls of emotions, which are forms of ignorance is the state of deep sleep. That is why this imperishable *purusha* does not perish except through knowledge. Therefore, it is well-known in the philosophy of Vedanta as the doctrine of the imperishable *purusha*. In this way, the form of the embodied Self which is assumed by consciousness through the limiting condition of Maya is the imperishable Self. (521-525)

17. *But different from these two is the Supreme Person called the Supreme Self, the immutable Lord who sustains these worlds after pervading them.*

In this way the states of wakefulness and dream, which spring from false knowledge become dissolved in ignorance. Like fire which is extinguished after burning firewood, this knowledge, after destroying ignorance, experiences the Supreme Self and vanishes. That which remains behind after knowledge ceases to exist is the Supreme Person. This is the third *purusha* different from the other two *purusha*. This is the ultimate truth of the doctrine of *purusha*. O Arjuna, just as the wakeful state, which gives knowledge of the world is entirely different from the states of deep sleep and dream (526-530) or the sun's disc is different from the sun's rays and mirage, so this Supreme Person is distinct from the two *purusha*. Just as the fire latent in firewood is different from it, this Supreme Person is distinct from the perishable and imperishable *purusha*. In a deluge the oceans transgress their limits and the whole world becomes a mass of water, leaving no trace of the separate existence of rivers and rivulets; in the same way, the states of dream, deep sleep and wakefulness cease to exist. Just as the conflagration at the time of world-dissolution consumes day and night, all empirical knowledge, along with monism and dualism, ceases to exist and one does not know whether there is existence or non-existence (531-535). Know this state to be the supreme *purusha*, who is also known in this world as the Supreme Self. Speech, which returns without touching him is possible only while one remains in the state of embodied existence. Just as standing safe on the bank of a river one can talk about a person getting drowned, so the Vedas talk about matters relating to this or the yonder shore. The Vedas think of the perishable and imperishable *purusha* on this shore as inferior and speak of the *purusha* who is on a higher plane as the Supreme Self. Please know, O Partha, that the term Supreme Self suggests this Supreme Person (536-540). That state where not to talk is to talk, not to know is to know, nothing happening is happening, is the Supreme Self. In that state, even the notion 'I am Brahman' ceases, the teller becomes what is told, and the

seer vanishes along with object to be seen. Can we say that the light ceases to exist, when the sun's disc and its reflection in water ceases to exist? We cannot say that the fragrance does not exist, because the fragrance standing between the flower and nostril cannot be perceived. In the same, way, can one ask, 'What is it that remains, when both the person who sees and the object to be seen cease to exist ?' Whatever comes to be experienced in that state is its form (541-545). That which illumines in the absence of the object to be illumined, which regulates in the absence of the thing to be regulated, abides in his pristine stage. It is he who is the inarticulate sound, which gives the power of hearing sound, the original flavour, which gives the power of taste. the bliss which gives the power of enjoyment. It is he who is the Supreme Person among the *purusha*, the acme of perfection, the resting place of rest, the joy of happiness, the splendour of the splendid and the great void in the void. He is beyond the expansion or the dissolution of the world, and is the greatest among all great things (546-550). As the mother-of-pearl, even without becoming silver, seems like silver to the ignorant or the gold assumes the form of the ornament without ceasing to be gold, so he supports the universe without assuming the form of the universe. Just as there is no distinction between water and the wave, so the universe is not different from the Supreme Self. O great warrior, he is the cause of the contraction and the expansion of the world, as the moon is the cause of the contraction and expansion of its reflection in water. He does not undergo any change when he assumes the form of the universe and does not disappear when the universe disappears. Just as the sun does not assume two different forms during the day and the night, (551-555) so he does not perish in any state. He can be compared only with himself.

18. *Since I transcend the perishable and am also superior to the imperishable (Self), therefore, I am, in the world and the Veda, renowned as the Supreme Person.*

    O winner of wealth, I am that Self free from limiting conditions, who illumines himself and is free from duality. Since, I am single and alone, superior to the perishable and imperishable *purusha*, the World and the Vedas proclaim me as the Supreme Person.

19. *He, who knows Me thus as the Supreme Person, knows all and worships Me with his whole heart, O Bharata.*

    O Arjuna, the sun of knowledge dawns upon him, who knows me as the Supreme Person. Just as the dream disappears after one wakes up, so with the dawn of knowledge the whole world appears to him as senseless (556-560). When one takes the wreath in his hand, he gets rid of the false imputation of a snake upon it, so when he attains to my knowledge, he is not deceived by the false appearance of the world. He who knows that the

ornament is really gold knows that the ornament is only a , false imputation on gold. Therefore, when he comes to know my real nature, he becomes free from all notions of distinctions. Then he knows that I am the self-evident Existence-Consciousness Bliss pervading everywhere and does not entertain the idea that he is different from me. To say that he knows all does not do him full justice, because the notion of duality does not exist in him. So he alone is fit for my devotion, as the sky is fit to hug itself (561-565). Just as the ocean of milk should be given the feast of milk or a thing which becomes like nectar should be mixed with nectar, or as when pure gold is mixed with pure gold, the mixture also becomes pure, so when a person becomes one with me, he offers me true devotion. If the river Ganges were entirely different from the sea, how could it have joined the sea? So there is mutual connection between unity with me and devotion for me. Just as the waves of the sea are not different from it, so there is no duality between me and my devotee. Just as the sun and his splendour are intimately related, so is the relation between me and my devotee (566-570).

20. *Thus this most secret scripture has been told by Me, O sinless one. By knowing this, one becomes an enlightened man with his work accomplished, O Bharata.*

In this way from the beginning of this Chapter, the doctrine of the Gita was culled from the scriptures like fragrance from lotus petals. The Gita is the essence churned out of the Vedas by the talent of the great Sage Vyasa. It is the Ganga of ambrosial knowledge or the seventeenth phase of the moon in the form of bliss or goddess of wealth churned out of the sea of milk in the form of right thinking. The Gita, therefore, does not hold anything dear except myself in words, letter and interpretation. Though the perishable and imperishable purusha had stood before her, the Gita rejected them and surrendered her body and soul to me, the Supreme Person (571-575). So this Gita, which you heard, is my devoted spouse. The Gita is not like a scripture which could be explained through spoken words. It is verily a weapon to conquer worldly existence. The words of the Gita are so many incantations (mantras) conducive to self-realisation. In this discourse on the Gita, I have taken out and laid before you my secret treasure. You have become a second sage Gautama to draw out the Ganga in the form of Gita from the matted hair of Lord Shankara in the form of myself as consciousness. O winner of wealth, you have indeed become a mirror in which I could see my essential nature (576-580). Just as the sea brings down the stormy vault to its bosom in the form of reflection, you have given me, together with the Gita, a place in your heart. By sweeping out from your heart the dirt of the three gunas, you have made your heart a fit abode for myself and the Gita. This Gita, to say the least, is the creeping plant of knowledge, and whoever knows it becomes free from delusion. When a person takes a sip of nectar, he becomes

immune to disease and immortal. Is there any wonder then that one who attains full knowledge of the Gita, gets rid of delusion? Through this knowledge of Self one attains union with the Supreme Self (581-585) and all activity comes to a stop, knowing that its life's work is fulfilled. O great warrior, just as with the recovery of the missing article, the search comes to an end, so when the dome of knowledge is built on the temple of activity, all actions cease. So said Lord Krishna, friend of the forlorn.

So this ambrosial discourse of Lord Krishna which filled the heart of Partha became available to Sanjaya through the grace of Sage Vyasa. Sanjaya offered it to Dhritarashtra, so that the king ceased to feel that life was a burden (586-590). Even though a person may be considered unqualified to hear the teaching of the Gita, he attains spiritual progress in the end. If a person pours milk at the foot of a vine, it seems such a waste, but he reaps in the end an abundant crop of grapes. So when Sanjaya narrated the teaching of Lord Krishna to Dhritarashtra with great respect, the king became happy. I have recounted to you this tale in a clumsy way according to my limited ability. One who lacks an aesthetic sense does not appreciate the chrysanthemum flower, and yet a connoisseur like a black bee carries away its fragrance (591-595). So you may kindly accept whatever appeals to you and return to me whatever is not good enough. Ignorance is a common trait of a child, but the parents, seeing it, fondle it with happiness, which overflows their heart. You are like my parents, and so I am lisping these fond words in the form of the Gita to you. Jnanadeva says, may my omniform Master, Shri Nivrittinatha, be pleased with this homage of mine (596-599).

Chapter Sixteenth

THE DIVINE AND DEMONIACAL NATURES

A marvellous sun has risen, who dispels the illusory form of the world and makes the lotus in the form of non-dualism blossom; I bow to him. This sun in the form of My Master dispels the dark night of ignorance, puts out the stars in the form of knowledge and ignorance and shows to the enlightened men the auspicious day of Self-realisation. When this sun rises, he gives the eye of wisdom and the birds in the form of beings leave their nests in the form of body-consciousness. With the rise of this sun, the bee in the form of the subtle body full of desires, is released from its confinement. This lamp of the world reunites the pair of chakravaka birds (the brahmany geese) in the form of the intellect and knowledge and makes them happy the chakravaka birds who had been trapped in the darkness of ignorance as a result of their being caught in the difficult situation of the incomprehensible words of the scriptures and were lamenting their separation on the two banks of distinction. (1-5) When knowledge dawns the time stolen by the thief in the form of distinction comes to an end and the wayfarers in the path of yoga walk along the way leading to Self-realisation. With the rays of this sun in the form of discrimination, the sun stone in the form of knowledge becomes ignited and burns the forests in the form of worldly affairs. When the rays of this sun fall on the sandy plains of the self. the latter becomes flooded with the mirage in the form of the great miraculous powers (mahasiddhis). When this sun reaches the zenith of Self-realisation in the noon of Brahmic state. then the shadow cast by delusive knowledge in ' the form "I am the body", vanishes (lit remains under his feet) (6-10). When in this state the dark night in the form of Maya ends, then who would remember the dream of world appearance and slumber in the form of false knowledge? When the bliss becomes plentiful in the city in the form of non-dualism, dealings in the form of worldly happiness become slack and what is more, in the light of this sun come the bright days in the form of liberation. When this king of the sky in the form of the Self rises, he does away with the rising and setting along with the directions and. destroying knowledge along with ignorance, he displays the knowledge of the Self which had been covered by them so long. In short, he creates this unique dawn (11-15). Who can see this sun of knowledge, who is beyond day and night and who is a globe of self-illumination without the aid of things that illuminate?

Whatever praise I offer to this sun in the form of consciousness is full of limitations and so I bow to him again and again. In order to praise the great glory of my Master adequately, the intellect has to become identified with the object of its adoration. The articulate speech, vaikhari, along with

the inarticulate speeches para, pashyanti and madhyama fade away in praising your good Self who becomes known with the cessation of all empirical knowledge of worldly things, who can be praised adequately only through silence and who is attained only with the elimination of the ego (16-20). If I were to request you to be pleased with the ornate hymns of praise, it will diminish our blissful state of unity. When a poor person coming across the sea of nectar does not know what hospitality should be extended to it and offers it vegetable dishes, that meal should be reckoned as a feast after taking into account the fervour with which it is offered. If someone were to wave the wick-lamp before the sun, he should not think it as a lesser form of worship but view it in the light of his devotion. Who would call it a child, if it knows what is good for it? But the mother feels happy at its ignorant chatter. See if a stream comes to join the Ganga with its dirty water. does the latter tell it to go back? (21-25) The sage Bhrigu kicked Lord Vishnu in the chest; but did not the Lord receive it with satisfaction as honour done to him out of affection? When the sky darkened by the night comes forward to meet the sun, does the sun tell it to go away? Forgive me, O my Master, for attempting to weigh you with the sun in a scale hung on the beam in the form of duality. Please treat me as you treated the Yogis who attained to you through meditation and praised you with Vedic hymns and forgive me. When I long to praise your virtues, do not take it as an umbrage. But in whatever way you take it, I would not stop without satisfying my strong urge to praise you. (26-30) When I started praising your nectar-like gift in the form of the Gita, my strength increased two-fold and fortune smiled upon me. O my Master, my tongue did penance of speaking the truth through many births, as a result of which I landed on the island of the Gita in this sea of worldly existence. The merit which I had specially accumulated so far gave me the ability to sing your praises and discharge its obligation to me. I had entered the forest of life in the commune of death, but I have got out of that wretched state. You extended your grace to me by asking me to describe the Gita, the well-known scripture which has become strong with the conquest of ignorance (31-35). When the goddess of riches visits the house of a poor man, can we call him indigent? If the sun visits the house of darkness as a guest, does not that darkness give light to the whole world? Does not God before whose glory this entire world seems a tiny speck assume a form for his devotee? In that way, my attempt to speak on the Gita is as improbable as the smelling of the sky-flower. But you with your might has made it possible for me. So Jnanadeva says, "I shall, through your grace, explain all the verses in the Gita in an easy and clear way" (36-40).

In the fifteenth chapter, Lord Krishna disclosed clearly the doctrine of the Gita to Arjuna. Just as an expert physician diagnoses a disease afflicting the body, so the Lord described this world in a flowery language with the simile of the Ashvattha tree. There the Lord explained in clear terms that the imperishable purusha, the consciousness, being joined to limiting

conditions (upadhi) became embodied. Then the pure Self was disclosed clearly as the Supreme Person. Next he explained .in clear terms how knowledge is the best internal means for the attainment of the Supreme Self (41-45). So there is nothing left which is worth speaking about. But there remained the strong bond between the preceptor and the disciple. Besides all the things narrated in the previous chapter were fully appreciated by the wise, but the desires of seekers remained unfulfilled. In the previous chapter the Lord of the three worlds has talked about the discerning person, all-knowing and the greatest among his devotees, who has attained him through knowledge and has also described the importance of knowledge in the last verse of the chapter. He said, "When my devotee gulps down the worldly existence through this knowledge and attains to my vision, he secures a place of honour in the kingdom of bliss" (46-50). He added that there is no other effective means to the attainment of Brahman and that this knowledge is the king among all means. So the seekers waved their very lives before this knowledge with great regard and pleasure. Now it is a sign of love that the more you like a subject, the more you think about it. So those seekers who had not attained knowledge were anxious to know how to secure it and after securing it, how to retain it. They, therefore, felt it necessary to know how to secure this divine knowledge and how to increase it, (51-55) why that knowledge cannot be secured and even if secured whether there is something hostile to knowledge which leads one astray. Then the seekers longed to give up those things which are hostile to knowledge and adopt all means which were beneficial for the attainment of knowledge. The Lord will now speak to fulfil that desire and to describe the glory of the divine endowment, which conduces to knowledge and also enhances the peace of the mind. He will also explain the terrible form of the demoniacal endowment, which lends support to passion and hatred through the knowledge of the sense-objects. (56-60) The subject of these two endowments, which respectively lead to desirable and undesirable actions, was mentioned briefly in the Nineth Chapter and should have been treated fully there. But this could not be done as other subjects intervened, and so the Lord will broach the same subject now. This discourse is contained in the Sixteenth Chapter and should be treated as a detailed exposition of the former statement. Thus there are two endowments, of which one is conducive to knowledge, and the other detrimental to it. Now first listen to the description of the divine endowment, which keeps one company in his march towards liberation and is like a torch in the form of duty which shows the way in the dark night of delusion. (61-65) If one gathers at one place many things which mutually support one another, such a collection of things is called an endowment. It is called divine endowment if it promotes happiness and is secured by a person only through good luck.

1. *Fearlessness, purity of mind, steadiness in Yoga and knowledge, charity, self-restraint, sacrifice, Vedic study, austerity, uprightness,*

Now that virtue which is foremost in this divine endowment is known as fearlessness. Just as a person, who does not leap into a great flood, is not afraid of being drowned, or one who follows the prescribed diet does not feel concern about being ill, so he who has no egoistic feeling while performing actions or not performing them, has no fear of worldly existence. (66-70) When' his mind is filled with the notion of non-dualism, he knows that the whole world is pervaded by Brahman and discards fear. Just as when the water starts to dissolve salt, the salt itself becomes fluid, so the non-dual state destroys fear. O Arjuna, this is the characteristic of what is known as fearlessrless and it is followed by true knowledge. Now that which goes by the name of purification of the mind should be known by the following signs. Just as the ashes do not burn nor are extinguished, or as the moon has the subtlest phase when the new moon night is gone, but the first day of the lunar month is yet to dawn (71-75) or the river Ganges is in its natural state when its flood of the rainy season has subdued but before the summer has begun, so the intellect, after discarding desires and doubts and dropping the burden of rajas and tamas qualities, develops a liking for meditation on the Self and so it is not disturbed the least if the senses present to it desirable and undersirable sense- objects. Just as the mind of a chaste wife pining for her husband who has gone to a distant place is not deflected by any consideration of loss or gain, so the intellect becomes fond of the Self and solely devoted to it. This state is known as the purity of the inward disposition, so said Lord Krishna, the killer of demon Keshi. (76-80) Then for attaining this Self one has to make one's mind steady on either knowledge or yoga and discard all other worldly ideas. Just as a person free from desire should make his final offering at the conclusion of the sacrifice, or a man of good family should give his daughter in marriage to a boy from a noble family and live in peace, or the goddess Lakshmi, after coming out of the churning of the Milky sea, should wed only Lord Vishnu, so he should engage himself in the yoga or knowledge, being free from doubts. This is the third characteristic of knowledge, so said Lard Krishna. Now true charity consists in not refusing help through body, speech and mind to a person in distress, even though he be an enemy and in not sending him empty-handed (81-85). O winner of wealth, just as a roadside tree never fails to give to a passer by its flowers and fruits, shade, roots and its leaves, so one offers wholeheartedly, as the occasion demands, corn or money to a tired guest to his satisfaction. This is charity and it is a sort of antimony, which helps a person to discover the hidden treasure of liberation. Now I shall tell you the characteristics of sense-restraint. Like a warrior who kills his enemy with his sword, the yogi does not allow the senses to combine against him but instead he brings about their separation. He prevents sense-objects from storming his mind through the doors of the senses and so by harnessing the senses through regular practice brings them under the sway of self-restraint (86-90). He sets fire of non-attachment to the ten sconces, so that their natural propensity to

activity deserts the mind. He observes many vows more rigorous than breath-control without a moment's pause. This is the sign of what is known as dama or restraint of the senses.

I shall now tell you briefly the characteristics of sacrifice. Beginning with Brahmins and ending with women they should observe the injunctions and perform their religious duties as laid down in the scriptures. (91-95) The brahmin should perform the six duties prescribed by the scriptures and the sudra should pay homage to the brahmin by which both of them acquire the merit of performing a sacrifice. In this way everyone should perform a sacrifice according to his qualification. but should not pollute the sacrifice by the expectation of its fruit. He should not entertain the egoistic feeling that he is the performer of the sacrifice, but he should follow the dictates of the Vedas in this regard. O Arjuna, this is what is called sacrifice as laid down in the scripture and it becomes the knowledgeable guide in the journey towards liberation. Now one throws the ball on the ground so that it should rebound and come into the hand or the farmer sows seed in the field in order to reap the harvest later (96-100). One takes the lamp in hand for finding a thing in the dark or one waters the tree at the roots for the growth of its branches and fruits. Likewise one willingly keeps the mirror clean in order to see one's face clearly in it. In the same way, one has to study the Vedas continuously in order to comprehend the nature of God, who is propounded by them. The Brahmins should, for example, study the aphorisms on the Brahman, and others should repeat the hymns and mutter the name of God. Lord Krishna says that this is what is known as sacred 'study' (svadhyaya).

Now, I shall tell you the meaning of austerity (101-105). The bitter colocynth withers after bearing fruit, the incense burns itself in order to give fragrance to others, the gold sheds its weight by burning to become pure, or the moon wanes in the dark fortnight of the lunar month to nourish medicinal plants. So, O Arjuna, to chasten one's life, senses and body is called austerity. The other kinds of austerities should be properly scrutinised before accepting them. Just as the royal swan puts his beak in milk mixed with water and separates the milk, so he keeps awake in his mind discrimination and separates the Self from the body, with which it is in conjunction. (106-110) When a person cogitates on the Self, his intellect contracts itself (i.e. withdraws itself from mundane things) and becomes introspective, in the same way as both sleep and dream cease after one wakes up. O Arjuna, that by which one turns to the thought of the Self, that is the true nature of austerity. Just as the mother's milk is good for the infant or consciousness abides equally in all beings, so polite behaviour towards all beings is known as 'uprightness'.

2. *Non-injury, truthfulness, absence of wrath, relinquishment, tranquillity, non-calumny, compassion for creatures, lack of greed, gentleness, humility, absence of fickleness,*

Now to conduct oneself with body, speech and mind with the sole object of making the world happy is the essence of non-violence. The bud of a flower, although pointed, is soft and the moonlight, although lustrous is cool. (111-115) There is no medicine which will cure the disease but has no bitter taste and so bears no comparison with truth. Just as water, brushed against the eyeball, does not prick it, but the same water pierces through hard rocks, so (speech), though hard as steel in dispelling doubt but more pleasant to the ears than sweetness; penetrates through to Brahman on the strength of its truthfulness (116-120). The hunter's song is sweet to the ears, but the motive behind it is bad; the Are performs its work of burning openly; but fie upon such outrageous truth! So that speech which is sweet to hear but pierces the heart with its import is not sublime but is verily fiendish. The mother's anger is harsh on the surface but is tender like a flower in cherishing and protecting the child. So the speech which is like a mother's talk pleasant to hear and is beneficial in its consequence and is at the same time free from passion, that is truthful speech.

Now just as a rock, sprinkled with water, does not produce sprouts, or butter cannot be secured by churning whey (121-125) or the slough of a cobra does not raise its hood when trampled upon, or the sky does not grow flowers in the spring, or even the sight of the nymph Rambha does not excite passion in the mind of sage Shuka, or ghee poured on ashes cannot kindle Are or prostrating before god Brahma does not make a dead person rise again, so when the utterance of words, which makes even an innocent child red with anger, does not produce wrath in him, that is the state of 'absence of anger', so said Lord Krishna to Arjuna (126-130). Now if one abandons the clay, one abandons the earthen pot; if one abandons the yarn, one abandons the cloth and if one abandons the seed, one abandons the tree. So if one abandons the wall, sleep, water, rainy season and riches, one automatically abandons the painting (on the wall), the dream, ripples, clouds and sensuous enjoyments respectively. In the same way enlightened persons relinquish the worldly affairs by abandoning the body-consciousness. This is known as tyaga, relinquishment (of fruit of action), so said Lord Krishna, the enjoyer of sacrifice.

Comprehending it, the lucky Partha asked (131-135), "O Lord, tell me in very clear terms the characteristics of tranquillity". Then the Lord replied, it is a good question, now listen attentively. Tranquillity is that state in which the knowable object is fully known, and both the knower and the knowledge cease to exist. When at the time of the deluge the waters flood

the entire universe and pervade it through and through everywhere, then all distinctive terms such as the source, current, joining the sea etc. become obliterated and no one is even aware that the whole world is covered with water; in the same way when the knower becomes one with the knowable object, "the state of knowing" also ceases to exist and whatever remains is the true nature of tranquillity (136-140).

A good physician treats a patient suffering from illness or mental anguish, without caring whether the patient belongs to his circle or is a total stranger. or one extricates a cow stuck in the mire without pausing to see whether she is a milch-cow or a dry cow. or one saves the life of a drowning person without asking him whether he is a brahmin or a shudra. or a gentleman does not look at a woman disrobed by a wicked person in a dense forest, until she gets properly dressed. In the same way, to those who have become addicted to despicable deeds owing to ignorance, heedlessness or as a result of their past actions (141-145) he imparts his goodness and makes them forget the misery which afflicts them. He purges the deficiencies of those who come to him by his glance and then looks at them with favour. Just as one offers worship to God and then fixes his mind upon him, or one sows the seed and goes to the field to protect the crop, or as one satisfies the guest and seeks his blessings, so he looks at others after making t-heir deficiencies good by his meritorious conduct. Not only this, but he does not taunt others for their foibles, and does not involve them in wicked deeds nor does he point his finger at their short-comings (146-150). He uplifts the persons who are depraved without taunting them for their weak points and he does not belittle them by comparing them with noble men. This is the true sign of absence of slander and it is an easy means of transport in the journey towards liberation.

Now compassion should be like this. Just as the moon on the full-moon night does not distinguish between persons as great or small in making them cool, so he relieves the misery of a person in distress without pausing to think whether he is noble or mean (151-155). Is there anything in this world other than water, which perishes itself and saves the withering grass? So even if he has to give all, he relieves the suffering of a person and thinks it a small sacrifice. Just as water does not flow over a ditch without filling it, so he does not take a step forward without comforting a tired person he comes across. Just as a shooting pain resulting from a prick of a thorn registers itself on one's face, he feels compassion at the suffering of others. Just as the eyes benefit from the cooling sensation of the sole, he fees happy by seeing others happy (156-160). His very living is meant for relieving the suffering of others, as water is created in this world to quench thirst. Such a person is compassion incarnate and I become beholden to him since his life began. With the sunrise the lotus blooms, but the sun does not smell it. When the spring

comes, the trees look fresh with foliage, but he passes on without enjoying that scenic beauty. When goddess Lakshmi approaches Lord Vishnu along with all miraculous powers, he does not even take notice of her. (161-165) In the same way, even if the pleasures of this and the next world come to him, he does not feel like enjoying them. In short, that state in which he does not entertain any desire for sensuous pleasures, is known as non-covetousness.

Just as the honey-comb is dear to the bee, water to the aquatic creatures, or the open sky to the birds, so he behaves gently with all beings. His gentleness is like the love of the mother for her child, like the soft and fragrant breeze blowing on the Malaya mountain at the advent of the spring, or the sight of dear and near ones to the eyes, or the fond look of a female tortoise which nourishes its chicks (166-170). Had the camphor, which is soft to the touch, tasty to the mouth, fragrant to the nose and clean in appearance, not been harmful when taken in a large quantity, it would have served as a good simile for this gentleness. Just as the space which carries all the gross elements in its compass, is contained in the smallest atom or assumes the form of the universe, so he lives his life only for the entire world. I call that state of his gentleness.

A king, when defeated, feels depressed or a self-respecting person becomes dispirited when reduced to a low position (171-175). A worthy ascetic becomes crest-fallen when he Ands himself in the house of a low-caste person, or a member of the warrior-caste feels ashamed when he flees from a battlefield. A chaste wife (with her husband living) feels abashed when she is called a widow, or when a handsome fellow suffering from leprosy feels as if he is in the throes of death or a respectable person feels the same when he is accused of a shameful act. In the same way, he feels ashamed to live like a corpse in the body three and half cubit long, to go through birth and death again and again or to pass his time in a womb, which is a mould of fat filled with blood and urine (176-180). In short, he does not think anything more disgraceful than to get into such a body and assume name and form. The nausea which a sinless person feels for such a loathsome body is known as humility, but a shameless person derives great pleasure in it. Just as the movement of a puppet comes to a stop with the snapping of the string (in the hand of the puppeteer), so his organs of action cease their activity when he practises breath-control. Just as the rays of the sun cease after sunset, so his organs of sense cease to function with self-control. In this way all the ten senses become feeble and this is known -as absence of fickleness (181-185).

3. *Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness, absence of envy and pride these, O Bharata, belong to one born to the divine endowment.*

When a person longs to pursue the path of knowledge for God-realisation, he does not feel the lack of strength. There is nothing so dreadful than immolation, but a chaste wife does not hesitate to enter the pyre of her dead husband. In the same way, a person longing to attain his Lord, the Self, rejects sensuous pleasures like poison and treads the difficult path leading to the formless Brahman. In this journey he is not obstructed by precepts or prohibitions nor is he lured by the miraculous powers. In this way, his mind is directed, of its own accord, towards the Supreme Self and this is known as spiritual vigour. (186-190) Now as the body is not aware of the numerous hair on it, so one is not proud that he is the best among those blessed with patience. This absence of pride is known as forbearance. When the senses have a strong appetite for sensuous pleasures, or a dormant disease raises its head, or one has to suffer separation from the dear and near ones and association with undesirable ones, when a person is flooded with such calamities, he stands Arm and faces it squarely like sage Agastya. Just as a gentle breeze disperses a heavy column of smoke in the sky, so he digests all the three classes of corporeal, physical and supernatural afflictions, if they fall to his lot (191-195). To sustain courage and stand steadfast on occasions of extreme perturbation of the mind is what is known as fortitude. When a gold pot is cleaned and filled with water of the Ganges, it becomes pure. Purity is like that. Disinterested activity and discrimination of the mind are the signs of external and internal purity. Just as the water of the Ganges eliminates the sins and afflictions of those who bathe in it and also nourishes the trees on its banks, or as the Sun makes his rounds in the sky, dispelling darkness. and opening chambers of beauty (196-200), so he liberates persons from their bondage, lifts up those drowning in the sea of worldly existence and relieves the sufferings of persons in distress-nay, he thinks that in promoting the happiness of others day and night he is furthering his own interest. He never entertains even the idea of causing harm to others to serve his self-interest. This, O Arjuna, is what is called absence of envy and I have told it in such a way that it is easy for you to understand. O Partha, just as the Ganga became ashamed when Lord Shiva bore her on his head, so to feel abashed when honoured (201-205) is known as absence of pride. I have explained this to you before (XIII-7) and so why should I repeat it now? This is the divine endowment consisting of twenty-six virtues, which is a gift of the Supreme Self, the sovereign of salvation. This divine endowment is like the river Ganga flowing with holy waters in the form of these virtues, who has descended to save Sagara in the form of the detached Yogi. Or it is like the bride with a garland in her hands, who has come to wed a person who is selfless. It is as though the Gita, holding a lamp with twenty-six flames in the form of these virtues, has come to wave it in front of her Lord, the Supreme Self (206-210). Or it is as though spotless pearls in the form of these virtues have come out from the mother-of-pearl in the form of the divine endowment from the sea in the form of the Gita. Now how much more should I describe this divine

endowment? It is not sufficient to know it but realise it. So I have described to you the characteristics of this endowment of a person who is endowed with these virtues.

Now know well the demoniacal endowment which is full of misery and demerits like a creeper full of thorns. Even if a thing is of no use and fit to be discarded, one has to know it well in order to abandon it. In this demoniacal endowment all the faults have combined to give hellish afflictions to the beings (211-215). As if all venoms are blended to form a deadly poison, the collection of all faults is this demoniacal endowment.

4. *Hypocrisy, arrogance and conceit, wrath as also harshness and ignorance - these, O Partha, belong to one born to the demoniacal endowment.*

That which is well-known as the foremost fault in the demoniacal endowment is hypocrisy. If the mother, even though sacred, is brought naked before the public, it leads one, .to perdition. The esoteric knowledge received from the preceptor leads to good results, but it causes harm if it is proclaimed publicly. A boat rescues persons caught in a great flood and takes them safe to the other shore; but a person who carries it on his head is drowned (216-220). O Son of Pandu, food ordinarily sustains life; but if one stuffs himself with it because it is tasty, it acts like poison. Therefore, if a religious act which is a friend in this and the next world, is proclaimed publicly, it causes more harm than good. O warrior, if religious acts performed by one are given wide publicity, they become impious. Know that this is hypocrisy. (Now to talk about arrogance) just as a foolish person who has just learnt his alphabets is not satisfied by a conference of persons well-versed. in Vedic lore or the insolent horse of an expert horseman scoffs at Airavata (elephant of god Indra), or a chameleon, who has climbed a thorny tree, considers the heaven as too low (221-225), or the flames of fire fed on grass reach even the sky, or the Ash in a pond holds the sea in contempt, in the same way a person becomes intoxicated with the possession of a wife, riches, education, praise and great honour like a beggar who becomes intoxicated by eating food given by others. It is as though an unlucky person, after seeing the shade of clouds, should pull down his house or a foolish person, after seeing the mirage, should fill up his well. In the same way, know that being puffed up with pride on account of one's riches is arrogance.

The mankind has full faith in the Vedas and so holds God who illumines the world in high reverence (226-230). It aspires for a high place, even sovereignty in the universe and likes that it should not meet with death. There can be no dispute about this. If, therefore, men sing zealously the praise of Vedas and God, he becomes furious with envy after hearing it. He says, "I shall swallow God, destroy the Vedas and their authority with my might." In the way the moth dislikes the light of the lamp, the glow-

worm hates the sun or the lapwing bears enmity with the sea, he does not bear through conceit to hear even name of God, if uttered in his presence. He treats even his father with a hostile feeling out of fear that he will ask for a share in his wealth (231-235). He is a person, who is stiff with self-importance,' overbearing and full of infatuation. This conceit is a high-way to hell.

(Now hear about wrath). His mind (i.e. of a demoniacal person) is poisoned by fiery wrath, when he happens to see others happy. If a drop of water is added to boiling water, it shoots up and when the jackal sees the moon, he becomes furious. The owl loses its vision at the rising of the sun, who illumines the world. The morning which gives pleasure is more painful to the thief than death and milk given to a serpent turns into poison (236-240). The submarine fire flares up by drinking sea water and never cools down. In the same way, when he sees the learning, luxurious living and good fortune of others, he becomes flush with anger. Know that this is wrath. (Now hear about harshness). He whose mind is like the hole of a serpent, whose sight is as fiery as a sharp-pointed arrow, whose speech is like the shower of live coals, whose actions are like a sharp saw and whose conduct is painful to others, is vile among men and harshness incarnate.

Now I shall tell you the characteristics of ignorance (241-245). Just as a rock does not feel cold or hot or a person blind from birth does not know day from night or the Are does not know what it should consume and what not, or the philosopher's stone does not distinguish between iron and gold or a ladle does not know the taste of juices in which it is dipped or the wind does not know the difference between a highway and a by-path, so he is blind to good and bad actions. Just as a child puts anything in its mouth without knowing whether it is good or bad (246-250), he consumes the hotchpotch of merit and sin without knowing whether it is bitter or sweet. There is no doubt that this state of mind is ignorance.

Thus I have explained to you the six faults, which have given strength to the demoniacal endowment. Even if the viper is tiny, its poison is deadly. Even if the fires namely world-conflagration at the time of dissolution, Are of lightning and the sub-marine fire are only three in number, the world is not sufficient for a ritual offering to them. When one suffers from the derangement of the three humours of the body (phlegm, wind and bile), one cannot escape death even if he seeks the protection of god Brahma. Now here are six faults, twice the number three (251-255) and since the demoniacal endowment is founded on these six faults, it never lacks anything. As if there should be a conjunction of evil planets in one sign of the zodiac or sins should pursue a slanderer, or all ' the ailments should attack a person when he is at the point of death or there should be a conjunction of evil planets, at an inauspicious time, or one trusting a thief

should get into his clutches, or an exhausted person should fall into a great flood so these six faults are disastrous to a person. These six faults pounce upon a person in the same way as a seven-stinged scorpion should sting a dying sheep (256-260). Even if a dribble of these six faults falls upon a person who has taken to the path of liberation, he sinks in worldly affairs and, descending the steps of vile births, he reaches the bottom and takes birth into the species of the immovable (such as trees and stones). In short, these six faults combine to enhance the demoniacal endowment. In this way, I have explained to you the different characteristics of these two endowments which are famous in the world.

5. *The divine endowment is known to lead to release, and the demoniacal to bondage. Grieve not, for you are born to the divine endowment, O son of Pandu.*

   Know that of the two the first, namely the divine endowment, is the dawn before the sunrise in the form of liberation. (261-265) The other demoniacal endowment is verily like an iron chain in the form of infatuation binding the Self. But do not entertain any apprehension after hearing this. Does the sun ever feel afraid of the night? O winner of wealth, only he who gives shelter to these six faults, is fettered by them. O Arjuna, you are born in such a way that you are the treasure of the divine virtues just mentioned. O Partha, you should become the lord of these divine virtues and enjoy the bliss of liberation in course of time (266-270).

6. *There are two creations of beings in this world; the divine and the demoniacal. The divine has been told at length; hear from Me, O Partha, of the demoniacal.*

   The actions of persons endowed with the divine and demoniacal endowments flow in different paths from time immemorial. Just as the thieves and other men transact their business during the night and the day respectively, so those who belong to the divine and demoniacal orders carry on their business. I have explained to you in detail the divine endowment earlier, while describing the means of knowledge. Now I shall speak to you about the persons who belong to the demoniacal order. Please give your careful attention (271-275). Just as there is no musical sound without a musical instrument or honey without flowers, so this demoniacal endowment does not become perceptible except when it takes recourse to a human body. Then just as the Are latent in Are-sticks remains pervading it, so the demoniacal endowment resorts to a human body and takes charge of it. It goes on expanding with the growth of the body in the same way as the juice in the sugar cane increases with the growth of the cane. O Arjuna, now I shall mention to you the characteristics of those who possess the demoniacal endowment (276-280).

7. *The demoniacal do not know when to act and when to refrain from action. They have no truthfulness, nor purity nor right conduct.*

   His mind is ignorant about what meritorious acts he should perform and what sinful acts he should avoid. Just as a silk-worm shuts itself in a cocoon, without knowing whether there is an exit to get out of it or a fool advances his money to a thief without considering whether he will return it, so the persons who are endowed with demoniacal endowment do not know what they should do or avoid, nor do they dream what purity is like. The coal may at times abandon its dark colour or the crow may become fair (in complexion) or a demon may feel sick of meat (281-285); but these demoniacal persons will have no purity like a decanter filled with wine. They do not like the dictates of scriptures and do not go the way of their elders, nor do they know what is good conduct. As the sheep grazes wherever it likes, or the wind blows at its sweet will or the fire burns everything unchecked, so these demoniacal persons behave without restraint and develop deadly enmity towards truth. If a scorpion could tickle with its sting (286-290) or if the wind released by the anus be sweet-smelling, then one can find truth in them. Even if they do nothing, they are wicked by nature. I shall' now tell the peculiar way in which they talk. Can you find any limbs in a camel which are straight and decent-looking? The ways of these demoniacal persons are like that. I shall tell you something about it as the occasion demands. Words come out of their mouths like columns of smoke from the mouth of a chimney.

8. *They assert that the universe is godless, without truth and without moral foundation. It is born from the mutual union (of man and woman) - what else? It is caused by passion.*

   People believe (they say) that this world has existed from time without beginning and that God is its controller and ruler. There the Vedas hold a court and decide what is just and what is unjust. (291-295) Those who are adjudged immoral receive the punishment of life in hell and those who are adjudged as moral dwell happily in heaven. They say that this governance of the world, which has come from eternity, is all false. (They further say that) those who are crazy about sacrifice are deceived by it. Those who are mad after deities are misled by idol-worship and the yogis, who wear ochre-coloured robes, are duped by the illusion of *samadhi* (abstract meditation). They contend that whatever one can secure through one's ability one should enjoy it; is there, they argue any good other than this? They further argue as follows: it is sin not to have the stamina to gather objects of sense-enjoyment and not enjoy them on account of one's physical disability (296-300). If it is sin to kill a rich person, the acquisition of his property is the fruit of merit. If it is harmful for the strong to destroy the weak, how is it that the big fish who devour the small ones are not annihilated through lack of progeny? Couples get married at auspicious

moment after a proper enquiry into the background of their families with the object of begetting good progeny. But the lower orders progeny; who gets them married after fixing the auspicious time for their marriages? Have the stolen riches ever proved poisonous to anyone? Do persons, who commit adultery out of love, ever suffer from leprosy? (301-305) The scriptures say that there is god who rules the world and dispenses the fruits of actions, both righteous and unrighteous and one has to suffer the fruit of one's actions in the next world. But all this is false, as no one can see the next world or god. When the doer of the meritorious deed or sin meets his death, who remains to experience the fruit of his actions? As we see, the worms find pleasure in refuse as much as the lord of heaven does in the company of nymph Urvashi. So neither heaven nor hell is a reward for merit or retribution of sin. In both cases it is the satisfaction of sexual urge, which brings happiness. The world is born and sustained through the union of men and women under the urge of passion (306-310). This passion promotes whatever is beneficial to man and (when it is thwarted), it destroys the world through mutual hatred. The men of demonical temperament thus aver that there is no other cause of the world except sexual passion. Let us stop this discussion on an odious subject which only exhausts the tongue.

9. *Holding fast to this view, these lost souls of feeble wit and of fierce deeds, come forth to destroy the world as its enemies.*

   Thus they scorn God and indulge in empty talk. Not only this, but they have reached the firm conviction that there is no god. In fact the give the impression of being heretics and atheism seems to be rooted in their bones. (311-315) The saplings (faint glimmerings) of faith in heaven and dread for hell in their minds get withered. Then they are caught in the stock of a body and like bubbles in dirty water they sink in the mire of sensual pleasures. Just as when the death of fish becomes imminent, the fishermen gather at the lake to catch them, so diseases of all kinds raise by sin (316-320). Just as fire does not look round while burning things, so they destroy everyone who comes within their orbit. Now I shall describe to you with what zeal they commit such misdeeds, so said lord Krishna to Arjuna.

10. *Resorting to insatiable passion, full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, they act with impure vows holding false views through delusion.*

    Even if one pours water in a net, it does not get filled up and the fire is not satisfied with any quantity of firewood. So the demonical men resort to lust which easily takes the first rank among insatiable things and which is hard to satisfy and give it the aid of hypocrisy and false pride. Just as an elephant in rut becomes wild if given an alcoholic drink, they get puffed up with pride as they grow old. (321-325) when folly gets added to obstinacy,

which is ingrained in their body, there is hardly any limit to their perversity. They are from their very birth habituated to doing acts which cause harm to others and destroy their lives. They look down upon the world and proclaim their exploits from their housetops. They spread the net of their desires in all directions and go on increasing their misdeeds with great excitement, in the same way as a stray cow goes on grazing wherever it likes.

11. *Beset with countless worries that last until death, they become immersed in the gratification of desires, convinced that that is all.*

With this object in view they conduct their affairs and also feel anxious about their state after death. (326-330) this anxiety is deeper than the nether world and higher than the sky and in comparison with it evens the three worlds looks insignificant. Just as the yogi feels anxiety whether he is observing the rules of yoga properly, so this unrestrained worry does not leave him. Just as chaste wife does not leave her husband, these demonical persons, longing for sense-enjoyments, suffer acute anxiety to secure them. They are fond of hearing the women sing, beholding their beauty and clasping them in close embrace, and feel like throwing away nectar to gain this happiness. They are fully convinced that there is no happiness, which is greater than what one receives from a woman (331-335). To secure that happiness they are ever ready to go to the heaven, the nether world or beyond the quarters.

12. *Bound by hundred ties of hope, given wholly to passion and anger, they seek, for the sake of sensual gratification, to amass wealth by unlawful means.*

Just as the fish swallows without thought the hook for the sake of the bait, sexual desire makes them reckless. If they do not succeed in securing their objects of desire, they go on spinning futile hopes like the silkworm, who spins a web round itself. If their desire is thwarted, it turns into hatred and then they think that the human life has no other worthy end than the fulfilment of desire and anger. Like a watchman who has to keep a watch during the day and do the patrolling by night, they do not get any rest (336-340). So these demonical beings roll down from the cliffs of (unfulfilled) desires and dash against the rocks of hatred, but inspire of this their penchant for desire and wrath does not diminish. When they feel such intense longing for sense-enjoyments, how can they satisfy it without lucre? So they assail the world to secure wealth sufficient for the satisfaction of their desires. They wait for an opportunity to catch a person single and then kill him, completely robe some one and hatch out a plot to ruin another. Just as a hunter goes to hunt on the mountain equipped with snares, snacks, nets, dogs, falcons, pairs of tongs, spears etc. (341-345) and kill many creatures to earn their living, so they too perform evil deeds.

Now hear with what gusto they acquire riches by destroying the lives of other creatures.

13. *"This I have earned to day; this desire I shall gain (next); this is already mine, more riches will come in future."*

    The demonical person says, "I have seized the riches of others, how blessed I am! No sooner he goes boasting like this than an intense longing catches hold of his mind. He says, "I shall still rob the riches of other men and suing this money as capital, I shall secure all movable and immovable property I can lay my hands on (346-350). I shall thus become the master of the world's riches and I shall appropriate whatever comes within my ken.

14. *"That enemy has been slain by me; I shall kill other too. I am the master, I am the enjoyed; I am successful, powerful and happy."*

    The enemies I have killed so far are few. I shall slay some more and live happily a luxurious life. I shall make other slave for me and destroy the rest. In short, I shall become the master of the entire universe. I shall be the king of this world and enjoy all pleasures, and even Indra, the lord of heaven, will feel shame seeing my glory. How cans anything which I take up in my hand with body, speech and mind not be completed? Who else is there to command and be implicitly obeyed (351-355)? Even Death can boast of its prowess, so long as it has not seen my power. Truly, I am the sole repository

15. *"I am rich and of noble birth; who else is there equal to me? I shall perform sacrifices, give alms and rejoice" so they think, deluded by ignorance.*

    Kuber is no doubt rich, but he too is not my peer in riches, and even the lord of goddess of wealth does not possess riches equal to mine. Even god Brahma would look deficient compared to the greatness of my family and the assemblage of my kith and kin. So no one who boasts of being God can equal me. I shall now revive the black magic that has become extinct and perform sacrifices in order to cause pain to other beings (356-360). I shall shower gifts on those who will sing my praise and entertain myself with dancing and melodramatic shows. I shall appropriate all happiness in this world partaking of intoxicating dishes and drinks and enjoying the embraces of women." In short, in this way these crazy persons of demonical temperament long with great hope to smell the flower of the sky.

16. *Bewildered by many such fancies, caught in the web of delusion and addicted to sensual enjoyments, they fall into foul hell.*

Just as a patient raves at random in delirious fever, so these demonical men babble their fancies. The dust in the form of their ignorance rises high and become the whirlwind in the form of hope, which keeps on soaring in the sky in the form of desires. (361-365). Just as clouds appear in the sky one after another in the month of Ashadha (July) or the waves form on the sea continuously, so their desires grow for constant sensuous enjoyments. Then their designs grow and spread like a creeper, but they are shattered like flowers when they are snatched from the thorny bushes or like an earthen pot dashed against a rock. As the intensity of darkness increases with the advancing night, infatuation grows in their minds, giving rise to a passion for sensual pleasures, which breeds sinful acts (366-370). When the sin derives strength and becomes crowded, then they suffer hellish life even in this world.

Therefore, O talented Arjuna, harbouring such wicked desires in their minds, these demonical men come to dwell (after death) in those places, where there are trees with sharp-edged leaves like swords, where there are mountains of live coals of *khadira* trees (*agacia catachus),* where seas of boiling oil rush forth, where there are a series of agonising tortures devised by the god of death; into such a hell they fall. Although born in this world but destined to fall into hell they fall. Although born in this world but destined to fall into hell, they too perform sacrifices assiduously in an infatuated state. (371-375) but, O Arjuna, even though such prescribed sacrificial rites are in order and should be performed as enjoined, they prove fruitless as they are performed with ostentation as in a dramatic performance. This is like a whore who lives under the protection of her lover and remains contented, pretending to be a loyal wife.

17. *Self – glorifying and stubborn, drunk with wealth and pride, they offer sacrifices in name only, ostentatiously not conforming to scriptural injunctions.*

In this way, they put on airs of greatness and become puffed up with pride. Then they remain rigid like a cast-iron pillar or a rock rising up high in the sky, living in comfort and luxury. On the strength of their riches, they look down upon others as if they are blades of grass (376-380). Moreover, intoxicated with the pride of wealth, they dismiss from their minds all thoughts of what is proper or improper. When such things accumulate and crowd in their minds, how could they be expected to perform sacrifices as prescribed? But one cannot be sure as to what such half-crazy persons will do. Some times in a frenzy of foolishness they are ready to perform a sacrifice sanctimoniously. For this, they do not need a sacrificial pit, nor a pavilion, nor an altar nor the materials necessary for a sacrifice and they are ever opposed to scriptural injunctions. They cannot bear to hear the names of deities and Brahmin priests wafted on their ears by a breeze. In such a situation who will care to attend their sacrifice? (381-385). But just

as clever persons, stuffing the skin of a dead calf with rice straw and keeping it before the cow, milk it, so they invite people under the pretext of a sacrifice in order to exact presents from them. So they perform sacrifices some times to gain prosperity and desire the ruin of other people.

18. *Given to egoism, strength, arrogance, passion and wrath, these malicious persons cavil at me in their own and other' bodies.*

Then beating big kettle-drums and unfurling flags, they show themselves off as initiated sacrifices, but all this is in vain. These mean persons become self-conceited by this false greatness. As darkness given a coating of lamp-black becomes more dark, (386-390) so their folly and arrogance increase and their egotism and thoughtlessness become doubled. Then they increase their power still more, so that no one should take anybody else's name. Thus, when their egotism increases, the sea of their arrogance crosses its limits. When their arrogance becomes exuberant, their passion gets excited and in its heat the fire of wrath is kindled. Then just as a big store of oil and ghee catches a blazing fire in hot season, and it becomes fanned by a strong wind (391-195), so their egotism becomes strong and their arrogance becomes shrouded in passion and wrath. When these two (egotism and arrogance) combine, will they then hesitate to cause injury to others according to their whims? O archer, they offer in sacrifices their own blood and flesh in order to secure success in black magic. When they torture their body in this way, I, dwelling in their body also suffer. And when they cause harm to others through black magic, they cause suffering to me, who dwell in their bodies as self (396-400). If any person escapes from the clutches of this black magic, they belabour them with their sly gossip. These demonical persons hurl sharp and poisoned arrows of slander at chaste women, saints, men of charitable disposition, great ascetics and monks, or devotees and magnanimous souls, who are my favourite places of abode, which have become holy by the performance of scriptural rites.

19. *I always throw such evil, hateful, cruel and vile men in the world into demonical wombs.*

Now hear how I deal with these sinful persons who are always hostile to me. (401- 405). Those, who assuming a human body, bear hatred to the world, I deprive them of their human form and deal with them as follows. I place these fools in the *tamsic* orders in the dunghill of the hamlet in the form of afflictions or the drain-water of the town in the form of worldly life. Then I make sure that they take birth in the species of tiger, scorpion etc. in forests where they cannot even have grass to eat. Suffering from pangs of hunger, they bite their own flesh and after death take birth in the same order again and again. Or I give them birth in the holes, where in the heat of their own poison, their skins get parched (406-410). I do not allow these

wicked persons to rest even for a brief span of time taken by the exhalation of the breath. I do not release them from their agonies, even if they have to remain in these conditions for a number of *kalpas.* This in fact in the first step in the long journey leading to their ultimate destination. Will they not then suffer greater agonies when they reach their final destination?

20. *Thus attaining demonical wombs, they become deluded birth after birth and sink into the lowest state; without attaining me, o son of Kunti.*

Because of their demonical nature they sink into the vilest state. Then I deprive them of whatever little solace they have in the body of the species of tiger etc. (411-415) and throw them into the state of *tamas,* in which even darkness in blacked out. This state of *tamas* is abhored by sin and dreaded by hell and the travail caused by it makes toil giddy. The contact of these demonical persons makes even filth more filthy, makes toil giddy. The contact of these demonical persons makes even filth more filthy, makes heat more heated and makes the abject fear tremble. They are detested even by sins, even inauspicious things find their touch unpropitious and even pollution is afraid of being polluted by them. O winner of wealth, in this way these vile persons, after suffering birth in many *tamasic* species, ultimately reach this *tamas* state (416-420). The faculty of speech mourns while describing this state and the mind becomes startled by its remembrance. Alas, what means have these fools accumulated to earn life in hell! Why do they cherish unnecessarily this demonical nature which leads to such a dreadful fall? Therefore, O Arjuna, you should avoid visiting the places where these demonically endowed persons dwell. And do I have to tell you that you should shun the company of those who possess in a great measure the six faults such as hypocrisy?

21. *This is the triple gate to hell, which spells doom for the self-passion, anger and greed; therefore, one should discard these three.*

O Arjuna, know that wherever these three, passion, wrath and greed are in the ascendant, there is sure to be an abundant crop of evil things (421-425). All miseries in this world have posted them as their guides, so that they bring persons to meet them. Or one can say that this triad forms and assemblage of all sins to push the sinners into hell. So long as these three faults do not arise in man's mind, the existence of hell is not known beyond the scriptures. Because of them, calamities occur with ease, agonies become cheap and what is ordinarily called ruin is not really so; these three spell real ruin. O great warrior, this three-pointed spike of vile faults is verily a gate to hell (426-430). He who receives these three wholeheartedly occupies a place of honour in the assembly-hall of hell. It is for this reason, O Arjuna, I repeat again and again that you should discard this evil triad of faults.

22. *A person, O son of Kunti (Arjuna), who is freed from these three gates of darkness, practises what is good for him and then reaches the highest goal.*

One who becomes free from this triad of mental disorders can think of achieving the four ends of human life. So long as these mental disorders are active in anybody's mind, he will not achieve weal. If anyone says that he wills, I am not going to listen to him, so said lord Krishna. He further said, anyone who longs for his own good or is afraid of his doom, should remain watchful and should not cherish these three faults (431-435). If one can hope to cross the sea on the strength of his arms after tying a stone round his belly or to survive after eating a meal of deadly poison, then alone can one expect to achieve the goal of life in association with passion, wrath and greed. So you should wipe them out without leaving a trace of them. If one can break the chain of these three faults, then one can walk comfortably on the path of happiness. He who has got rid of these three faults becomes happy like a body freed from the three disorders (phlegm, wind and bile) or like a town free from theft, malicious gossip and a town free from theft, malicious gossip and harlotry or like a mind free from three-fold affiliations. He then secures the company of righteous persons and treads the path of liberation (436-440). Then on the strength of the company of the virtuous persons and under the guidance of the scriptures, he crosses the waste lowlands in the form of births and deaths. Thereafter, he attains the beautiful spot in the form of Guru's grace, where abides eternal bliss of self. There he meets the mother self, who is the acme of affection, and in whose embrace the kettle-drum of the world existence ceases to beat. Thus, he alone, who frees himself from passion, anger and greed wins the prize of self.

23. *(But) he, who ignoring the scriptural injunctions, lives indulging his desires, does not attain perfection, nor happiness nor the highest goal.*

Now he who has no liking for the attainment of the self and who indulges in passion and the rest, he brings his own ruin (441-445). He disregards the feathery Vedas, which are uniformly kind to all and which show, like the headlight, the path of merit and demerit. He shows scant regard to the rules of conduct laid down by the Vedas, neglects his own interests and indulges the senses. He clings to passion, anger and greed and does not ignore their dictates. Thus, he (giving up the highway to liberation) enters the jungle in the form of wild conduct and wanders freely there. He cannot free himself from these mental disorders even for a moment and he does not even dream of getting out of their clutches. In this way he loses the heavenly joys and cannot enjoy even the pleasures of this world (446-450). If a Brahmin enters the river to catch fish and is drowned, he incurs the obloquy of being a heretic. In this way, in the pursuit of sensuous enjoyments, he loses heaven and gets into the clutches of death. He thus

gains neither the joys of heaven nor the pleasures of this world; then why talk of his securing liberation? In view of this, whoever under the urge of passion, strives for sensuous enjoyments, does not secure either worldly or heavenly pleasures or achieve salvation.

24. *Therefore let the scriptures be your authority for determining what is your duty and what is not. After knowing what is prescribed in the scriptures, you should do your work in this world.*

For this reason, O dear Arjuna, one who has solicitude for his own good, should not disregard the dictates of the Vedas (451-455). A loyal wife wins the favour of her husband and thereby secures her good. The disciple who moulds his conduct keeping in mind the instruction of the preceptor, attains to the knowledge of the self. Moreover, if a person has hidden his treasure in a dark place, he has to take a lamp to get it back. In the same way, if one desires to master the four ends of life, he must show profound reverence to the rules laid down by the scriptures and codes of law *(smriti).* He should renounce what is forbidden by them, and even if it be a kingdom, he should treat it as a blade of grass. One should follow that is enjoined by the scriptures, even though it be deadly poison (456-460). How can one who has such implicit faith in the Vedas ever come to evil? O Arjuna, there is no mother in this world like the scripture who protects her child from evil and promotes its well-being. Therefore do not forsake this motherly scripture, which leads one to the attainment of the supreme and devote yourself to her with single-mindedness. O Arjuna, you are born in this world on the strength of your past deeds to demonstrate the fruitful message of the scriptures and you have won for yourself the nickname 'follower of Dharma' (meaning also younger brother of Yudhishthira who is also known as Dharma). You should, therefore, not do anything contrary to the Vedic precepts (461-465). You should judge the propriety or otherwise of your actions with sole reference to the scriptures. You should shun whatever is improper and carry out sincerely your duties to their completion. O talented Arjuna, you now possess the signet-ring in the form of intellect, which is held as valid all over the world. You have, therefore, become fit to guide the world by your conduct on the righteous path.

In this way, the lord explained to Arjuna the characteristics of the demonical nature and also the way of escape from it. Now Arjuna will question the lord on the nature of faith; please listen to it attentively (466-40). I am telling you though the grace of Shri Nivrittinatha what Sanjaya said to Dhritarashtra at the behest of sage Vyasa. O saints, if you look at me with your kind glances, I shall be as great as yourselves. Shri Jnanadeva says, kindly show me the favour of your attention so that I shall achieve my cherished object (471-475).

Chapter Seventeenth

THREE KINDS OF FAITH

O my Master, your quiescent meditation *(yoganidra)* releases the hold of this universe of name and form: my obeisance to you who are verily Ganesha, the lord of *ganas (demigods).* The embodied Self confined in the body was released by your remembrance, like Lord Shankar who was trapped in the three cities of demon Tripura. If you are weighed with Shri Shankara, you tip the scale, but on the other hand, you are like a light raft to carry a person safe across the sea of worldly existence. To those who are ignorant of your true nature, you seem to have a crooked face *(vakratunda),* but you always appear straight to the wise. Your divine eyes look small, but by opening and closing them you bring about sportingly the creation and dissolution of the universe (1-5). When you flap your right ear in the form of activity, then the wind fragrant with your rut blows, attracting the bees in the form of embodied Selves. When these bees sit on your temples, they appear like a wreath of blue lotuses offered to you in worship. When you flap the other (left) ear in the form of renunciation, then the worship is concluded and then your bodily form is revealed in its pristine glory. This illusive world appearance is only due to your sportive dance. You display your skill by performing the *Tandava* dance (the violent dance of Lord Shiva). This apart, the wonderful thing about you is that with whomsoever you form a kinship, that person is deprived of this kinship (with the loss of the sense of dualism). When you remove their bonds of *karma,* they feel that you are the brother of the world and joyfully render you service (6-10) and lose their body-consciousness. But those who think that you are separate from them and run to reach you by diverse means, you remain hidden beyond their ken. You are never seen in the vicinity of those who meditate upon you; but the one who loses his body-consciousness in such meditation becomes dear to you. He who does not know your eternally self-same nature, shows himself off as all-knowing. Even when the all-knowing Vedas propound you, you do not lend your ears to them. From your *rashi* (sign of the zodiac) in which you were born, may be you have received the name of *mouni* i.e. the silent one. Then how can I aspire to sing your praise? Whatever is perceptible is all your *Maya,* illusion; how then can I worship you (11-15)? If I wish to be your servant, I become liable to the charge of considering myself distinct from you. So it is best not to do anything for you. It is only when one drops all notions of duality, then one attains to your non-dual nature. O my Master, who are adorable one, I have now come to know this secret of yours. You should accept my obeisance like water which does not regard salt as separate from it but allows it to get dissolved in it. What more can I

say? An earthen pitcher dipped in water comes out brimful with water. When the wick comes into contact with the lamp, it becomes: the lamp itself. In that way, O my Master, I have attained fulfilment by bowing to you.

Now I shall proceed with the interpretation of the Gita (16-20). The Lord concluded in the last stanza of Chapter XVI that the scripture should be accepted as the sole authority to determine what is proper to be done and what is not. Then Arjuna said to himself, "How is this? Is there no other way of undertaking action without reference to the scripture? This is like taking out the gem from the hood of a snake and pulling out a hair from the nostril of a lion and then wearing the ornament by stringing the gem in the hair. If this is not possible, should one keep the neck bare? (21-25) In the same way, who would be able to bring together the different scriptures and cull out the fruit of consensus from them? Even if such a consensus is secured, will there be sufficient time .to act according to it? How can one be fortunate enough to bring about a concatenation of all materials to achieve this such as long life, study- of scriptures, their Interpretations, the suitable time and place for it? So it may not happen on many occasions that actions will be done in accordance with the scriptures. Then how are the dull-witted seekers to fare? The subject which has been broached by Arjuna to seek a clarification of this doubt is contained in Chapter XVII (26-30). So Arjuna, who is desireless in regard to all worldly objects and proficient in all arts, and wonder of wonders, who in his role as Arjuna attracts even Shri Krishna, who dwells in the heart of the Lord, who is the support of bravery, the ornament of the lunar race, the lover of intelligence, the resting place of the Brahmic lore, spoke thus:

Arjuna Said:

1. *Those who, laying aside scriptural rules, offer sacrifice full of faith – what is their standing, O Krishna? Is it one of purity (satva), passion (rajas) or darkness (tamas)?*

O Lord, who are dark-coloured like a leaf of *tamal* tree *(Laurus* Cassia) and the embodiment of Supreme Brahman manifest to the senses, your speech has raised some doubts in my mind. How did you say that no one can attain salvation without strict adherence to the scriptures (31-35)? Many persons may not find suitable time, place, a teacher and other facilities for the study of the scriptures or as a result of their past deeds possess the necessary intelligence to study them. For these reasons some men's study of scriptures may come to a stop or some may give it up, as they have no flair for it. (36-40) Still they, longing to be like those who have performed actions as laid down by the scriptures and enjoyed happiness in the next world would like to follow their path.

O Gracious Master, just as a child copies letters after seeing them in a lesson or a blind person goes behind one with good sight walking ahead, so they regard as authoritative the conduct of persons proficient in all scriptures and follow their path in full faith. They perform the worship in great faith of gods such as Lord Shiva, give liberal gifts of lands and perform sacrifices such as offering daily oblation to the fire *(agnihotra).* Tell me, O Supreme Person, the fate of such persons, whether it is *sattvic, rajasic* or *tamasic* (41-45). Then spoke Lord Krishna, the Lord of Vaikuntha, who is like pollen in the lotus in the form of the Vedas, in whose shade this universe subsists, who is *kala* (Time) endowed with great dignity and majesty and with power through which all virtues receive acclaim, who is one without a second, mysterious and blissful,

The blessed Lord said:

2. *Threefold is the inborn faith of embodied beings. It is pure, passionate and dark, hear about it.*

The Lord said, O Partha, I know what is in your mind. You find the study of scriptures difficult, and wish to attain liberation only with faith, but that too. O wise one, is not so easy (46-50). O Arjuna, it is not proper to place your confidence in any kind of faith. Does not a Brahmin become a Shudra in the company of a low-caste person? One should not drink anything from a liquor pot, even if it is the holy water of the Ganga. It is true that sandalwood is cool, but if it is set on fire and held in hand, will it not burn the fingers? If an alloy is added to pure gold while melting it, will not the gold become impure and cause a loss? So even if faith by itself is pure, it does not remain so when it becomes a part of a being (51-55). For beings are, by nature, constituted by the three *gunas* under the sway of beginningless *Maya.* When two of them become feeble and the third becomes strong, then the mental tendencies of a person follow the dominant *guna.* The mind follows the tendencies, actions follow the mind, and then beings take birth according to their past actions. The seed disintegrates and grows into a tree, and then the tree becomes stored in a seed after destruction. In this way even after a lapse of numerous epochs, the species of the tree does not become extinct. So even if beings undergo innumerable births, there is no change of the *gunas* in their constitution (56-6O). So whatever faith falls to the lot of beings is formed according to these three *gunas.* When the *sattva* becomes dominant, it gives rise to knowledge, with the other two *gunas* opposing it. The *sattvic* faith leads to liberation, but how could *rajas* and *tamas* remain quiet? When the *rajas* quality becomes dominant overcoming *sattva,* then this faith makes one clear the rubbish of actions. When the *tamas* quality becomes inflamed, it transforms this faith in such a way that it involves beings in undesirable sensuous enjoyments (61-65).

3. *The faith of everyone, O Bharata, conforms with his nature. A person is made up of faith; he is verily what his faith makes him.*

   So, O wise Arjuna, there is no faith in the assemblage of beings, which is independent of the *sattva, rajas* and *tamas,* qualities. For this reason faith too is threefold, as it is constituted by the three *gunas* in different proportions. Although water is a preserver of life, it becomes fatal when mixed with poison, pungent when mixed with black pepper and sweet when mixed with sugarcane juice. When the *tamas* quality becomes dominant, one gets born and dies again and again and his faith also takes the *tamas* form. As there is nothing to choose between lamp-black and ink, so *tamasic* faith is not different from the being (66-70). Likewise in the case of a rajas-dominated person, the faith is of the rajas quality and in the case of a *sattva*- dominated person the faith is of *sattva* quality. In this way the whole world is cast in the mould of faith. But take note of the fact that this faith has different marks, as it is under the domination of one of the three *gunas.* The fruit of a tree can be guessed from its flower, or the mind of a person is known from the way he talks or the past actions of a person can be inferred from the pleasure and pain he experiences in the present life. In the same way, the three kinds of faith are known by their different signs. Hear about them now (71-75).

4. *Sattava-type of men worship gods; the rajas-type worship gnomes and demons; and tamas-type worship ghosts and hosts of spirits.*

   The mind of those whose body is moulded in the sattvic faith is usually inclined towards heaven. They study all lores, perform select sacrifices and go to heaven. O great warrior, those whose body is moulded in the *rajas* faith, worship the gnomes and demons who roam in the sky. Now I shall tell you about persons whose bodies are moulded in the *tamas.* They are corrupt souls, very harsh and cruel. They kill beings and worship with their flesh and blood ghosts, spirits etc. in the cemeteries (76-80). Such persons, who are formed from the essence of *tamas* quality are the very homes of tamasic faith. These are the three kinds of faith and I am telling them to you with the sole object that you should conserve only the *sattvic* faith and discard the other two faiths. He who preserves this *sattvic* faith has no apprehension about the attainment of liberation. He may not have studied the *Brahmasutras* or the scriptures or becomes acquainted with the Vedanta doctrines (81-85). But it he follows the footsteps of those who have comprehended the meaning of the Vedas and the *Smritis* and who, by their exemplary conduct, have become worthy of being adored by the whole world, he wins the same place as they do. If a person succeeds with great effort in lighting a lamp, and another without effort lights his lamp on the former, does he get cheated in respect of the light? If a person builds a mansion at a great cost, would not another person derive the same comfort if he lives in that house? If a tank is built by a person,

will it satisfy the thirst of the builder only and not of others? When food is cooked in the house, does it give satisfaction only to the cook and none else (86-90)? Does the river Godavari become holy Ganga only to sage Gautama who brought it to the earth and a brook for others? Therefore, he who follows in good faith those who act according to the precepts of scriptures more assiduously than himself, becomes liberated, even though he is ignorant.

5. *Men who undertake severe austerities, not prescribed by the scriptures, out of ostentation and egotism, overpowered by passion and attachment,*

   Then there are those, who are utterly wanting in the study of scriptures and are not prepared to permit those proficient in the scriptures to cross even the boundary of their town. They mock at their elders who offer worship and prayer to God and clap the hands in derision at the discourses given by learned men. They follow the austerities practiced by the heretics being full of conceit of their greatness and intoxicated with their riches (91-95). They draw out flesh and blood from their own bodies and those of others by means of a woodbill and fill up sacrificial posts to the brim. Then they pour these in the burning sacrificial fires and offer them as oblations to minor deities. They sacrifice child-victims to them in fulfillment of the vows taken by them and observe fasts for seven days at a time perversely to propitiate minor deities in boons from them. O wise one, in this way they sow the seeds of self-torment and torture of others in the fields in the form of their hearts possessed of the *tamasic* quality and reap the crop. The state of the demoniacal persons is like that of a cripple, who Ands himself in the sea without arms to swim across or a boat in which to cross it. (96-100), or like a patient who being cross with the doctor, kicks the medicine and suffers the agonies of his disease or like a person who scoops out his eyes in a quarrel and becomes confined to his house. This is because they abandon the path prescribed by the scriptures and wander about aimlessly in the jungle in the form of infatuation. They act as directed by desire, get into the clutches of wrath and belabour others, and what is more, they bury me (who abides in their hearts) in a pit in the form of misery.

6. *Mindlessly torturing all elements forming their bodies and Me too within their bodies – know them to be of demonical resolves.*

   By causing misery to their, body or the bodies of others, they afflict me, (who abides in them as) their Self (101-105). One should not sully one's speech by uttering the names of such sinners; but I had to mention them in order that you may avoid them. One has to remove a corpse out of the house or avoid a low-caste person by sweet talk or wash off the filth from the bottom. All these things are done in the interest of cleanliness and so do not defile anyone. In the same way, as the demonical persons are

described so that you can shun their company, their mention does not cause pollution. Even when you see such a person (from a distance) remember me; for there is no other way to atone for it. Therefore, one should always foster the growth of the *sattvic* quality (106-110). One should keep company and eat food so as to promote the growth of the *sattva* quality. There is no way other than the food you take for the formation of your disposition. As you can see for yourself, a sober person becomes intoxicated after drinking liquor. As a result of the food that you eat, you are afflicted with bodily disorders such as phlegm and cough. If you get fever, will it subside by drinking milk? As a sip of nectar prevents death or a drink of poison brings about death (111-115) so the food that you take nourishes the primary fluids *(Dhatu)* of your body, which also foster the primary emotions -in the minds of men. Just as when the pot is heated the water in it also becomes hot, so the mental disposition is also conditioned by these fluids. If you take *sattvic* food it fosters the growth of *sattva* quality; but if other kinds of food are taken the *rajas* and *tamas* quality are fostered. Now I shall explain to you what is *sattvic* food and what are the characteristics of *rajasic* and *tamasic* food; hear it attentively.

7. *Food also preferred by all is of three kinds; so are sacrifice, austerity and charity; Listen to this distinction of them.*

   Now I shall explain to you clearly how the same food comes to be of three kinds (116-120). The food has to be prepared according to the taste of one eating it and the eater of the food is the servant of the *gunas.* The embodied Self who is the doer and the experiencer acts according to three kinds of his mental disposition formed by the three *gunas.* So food is of three kinds and so- are sacrifice, charity and austerities. Now I shall proceed to describe to you the characteristics of food first as promised.

8. *Food that promotes long life, energy vigour, as also health, comfort and pleasure, are tasty, oily, wholesome and agreeable; they are preferred by the sattva-type.*

   If a person is luckily disposed towards *sattvic* type of food, he becomes inclined to eat sweet things (121-125). The *sattvic* articles of food are naturally savoury, sweet, oily and well cooked. They are well shaped, soft to touch, succulent and tasty. They are juicy and soft and their liquidity is reduced by heating. Just as even a few words from the lipy of the preceptor brings about a great transformation of the mind, so the *sattvic* food taken in small quantities gives immense satisfaction. Such food tastes good at the time of eating it, and it also produces good effects. The sattvic person has a special liking for such food (126-130). Such are the characteristics and effects of sattvic food, which promotes long life. When the cloud in the form of *sattvic* food floods the body, the river in the form of longevity becomes swollen day by day. Just as the sun is the cause of the

advance of the day, this kind of food is suitable to nourish the quality of *sattva.* Physical and mental strength is also promoted by this food; then how can ailments affect such a body? If a person takes such *sattvic* food, he enjoys sound health (131-135) and as a result he becomes happy and makes others happy. So his activities bring happiness to all and joy to him. In this way, the *sattvic* food produces good results and proves beneficial to the body both internally and externally. Now I shall tell you, as the occasion demands, what kind of food is dear to the *rajas-type.*

9. *Food that are very bitter, sour, salty, very hot, pungent, rough and burning are liked by the rajas-type; they produce discomfort, misery and sickness.*

   The food which is bitter but not fatal like poison, which burns the tongue and is sour, which is mixed with salty ingredients in the same proportion as water is required to moisten the flour, is liked by the rajas-type person (136-140). He likes to eat food so hot that it is like swallowing fire. He demands such hot food that a wick can be ignited by the steam arising from it. He takes food as hard as the tip of iron crow-bar, which hurts him without causing a wound. He likes food which is dry in and out like ashes and gives a burning sensation to the tongue. He enjoys eating solid food, for chewing which he has to grind his teeth (141-145). He likes to eat such hot and pungent food with mustard added to it that his nostrils and mouth smart under it. A spicy dish (rayate) which surpasses Are in giving a burning sensation is dearer to him than his life. Not satisfied with this kind of food, this crazy person swallows fire in the form of food. After eating cloves and dry ginger, he rolls on the ground in great pain and goes on drinking water without a stop. This is not really food, but is like eating something which excites and wakes up the serpent in the form of ailment (146-150). Ailment after ailment immediately raises its head, vying with one another to overtake him. In this way, rajasic food yields only the fruit of misery. O Archer, thus I have described to you the nature of rajas food with its effects. Now I shall tell you the nauseating food which the *tamas* – type person likes. Like the buffalo which eats hash of grain, bran etc. he eats only petrified and left-over food and does not pause to think that it will cause him harm.

10. The *food that* is *kept overnight, tasteless, smelling badly and stale, as also unclean left-overs of* a *meal* is *preferred by the tamas-type.*

    He eats with great relish the food cooked in the morning, at noon or the next-day (151-155). He also eats food half-cooked or half-burnt and also the food which is not savoury. He does not like savoury food or food which is well cooked. If by chance he gets wholesome food to eat, he keeps it like a tiger until it gives a foul smell. He eats from one plate along with his family food that was cooked many days back, that has lost all its flavour and has become dry, that has rotted or become infested with worms or

food that has been crushed and squeezed by children like clay or a hotch-potch *(bodana in marathi)* made by married and virgin women sitting together (156-160). When he eats such foul and dirty food, he feels that he had a satisfactory meal. But the wretch that he is, he is not even satisfied with such food. The marvel of it is that he craves for food or drink which is prohibited by the scriptures and which is not fit for eating or drinking. O brave Arjuna, he is very fond of such food and he reaps the fruit of it immediately. When he partakes of such food, he commits sin (161-165). When he takes such food, he does not feed himself but stuffs himself with trouble. By eating such food, he experiences and suffers agonies somewhat like that of a person who is being executed or who has entered a blazing fire, so said Lord Krishna The effect of the *tamasic* food is not distinguished from the tamasic disposition. Now sacrifice is also of three kinds like food. O noblest one, I shall now tell you the characteristics of a *sattvic* sacrifice (166-170).

11. *That which is offered according to injunction by persons without desiring fruit, with the conviction that one ought to sacrifice is of sattva quality.*

    Just as the chaste wife does not allow her desire to grow for anyone other than her husband, or the river Ganga does not go forward after joining the sea or the Vedas observe silence after the vision of the Supreme Self, they become absorbed in the performance of sacrifices in furtherance of their weal and do not entertain a desire for the fruit. When the roots of a tree are watered, the water does not recede but soaks into all the parts of the tree. In the same way they decide to perform sacrifices and become absorbed in their heart and soul in a disinterested spirit (171-175). Giving up the desire for their fruit and becoming indifferent to all things except their religious duty, they complete the sacrifice perfect in all ways. Just as one sees clearly his own face in the mirror, or the jewel placed on his palm in lamp-light, or the way after sun-rise, they observe all the injunctions laid down by the scriptures and prepare all materials like sacrificial pit, pavilions, altar etc. as if the scriptures incarnate have come there and made all preparations. Just as ornaments properly worn on their respective limbs look nice, all the things needed for the sacrifice are arranged in a proper order (176-18O). In what words should I praise the sattvic sacrifice? It is as if the sacrificial lore has assumed that glamorous form. Just as a *tulsi* plant is grown by irrigation water without the expectation of fruit, flower or shade (which it does not give), so a sacrifice performed as prescribed without a desire for its fruit or fame is *sattvic* sacrifice.

12. *But that which is offered, O Bharata, keeping in view its reward* as *also for the sake of ostentation, know that sacrifice to be of rajas quality.*

O great warrior, this *rajasic* sacrifice is also performed as prescribed. (181-185). But just as a king is invited to a *shraddha* ceremony with the hope that in addition to the completion of the ceremony his visit to one's house would be useful and bring one fame, so a sacrifice is undertaken in the hope that when performed, it would lead to heaven and also bring one public honour as a sacrificer. Such sacrifices which are performed in the expectation of their fruit as also fame in the world are *rajasic* sacrifices.

13. *They call that socrifice of tamas quality which is empty of faith and contrary to scriptural injunctions, and which is offered without distributing food, without chanting manatras and giving gift.*

    As in the mating of animals and birds, only lust is required and not a priest. so in a tamas- dominated person his pertinacity becomes the cause. If ever the wind will have to find where to blow or death will wait for an auspicious moment or the Are will be afraid to burn forbidden things (186-190), then alone the *tamasic* sacrifice would come under the - regulation of scriptures. O archer, the conduct of the tamas-type person is whimsical. He does not care for the precepts laid down by the scripture, not does he feel the necessity of incantation of the *mantras.* Even the housefly does not find food there. When the Brahmins are treated with hostility. what scope is there for the distribution of gifts *(dakshina)* to them? Just as the fire flares up and becomes a conflagration when aided by the wind or the property of a person without an issue is plundered after his death, money is squandered on the sacrifice with little faith in it. This semblance of a sacrifice is known as *tamasic* sacrifice: so said Lord Krishna, the Lord of goddess Lakshmi. (191-195)

    Just as the Ganga water, while flowing through different courses, is unclean at some places and pure in others, so the austerities are of three kinds according to the three *gunas.* One kind yields sin, the other leads to deliverance. If you desire to know how the austerities become threefold, then try to understand them. Now I shall explain to you the nature of austerities and then tell you how they become threefold according to the three *gunas.* There are three kinds of austerities of body, speech and mind (196-00). Now hear about the austerities of the body. Whether Lord Shankara or Lord Vishnu is his favourite God.

14. *The worship of gods, teachers and wise men, cleanliness and straightforwardness, continence and non-injury are called the austerities of the body.*

    His feet are occupied throughout the day in visiting the temple of his favourite deity or undertaking pilgrimage. His hands are ever engaged in decorating the precincts of a temple, or gathering the articles required for worship or rendering other services to me. When he sees the *linga* of Lord

Shiva or the image of Lord Vishnu. his body prostrates itself before it like a stick which drops down on the floor. He serves the Brahmins who have, through their virtues such as learning, humility etc., have become worthy of respect (201-205). He brings happiness to those who are in distress because of fatigue of travel or adverse circumstances. He waves his body in the service of his parents. who stand foremost among all holy places. He renders service to his Guru, who imparts knowledge out of compassion and grants relief to those who see him, from their fatigue due to the worldly existence, which is difficult to cross. He burns in the fire of his religious duties the alloy of body-consciousness by giving coatings of yogic practices. With the full knowledge that the Supreme Self abides in all beings, he bows to them. He is always ready to bestow favours on others and restraining his senses, he avoids meeting with women (206-210). His only contact with a woman was at the time of his birth, but after that he avoids such contact and remains clean all his life. He does not walk over green grass knowing fully well that there is life in all things and avoids breaking things. In this way, when the activities of his body remain pure, then know that his austerities of body have become perfect. O Partha, when all such things take place in relation to his body, I call them austerities of the body. I have thus told you the characteristics of the austerities of the body. Now hear about the austerities of speech which are flawless. (211-215)

15. *Speech which causes no annoyance and* is *truthful, pleasant and beneficial,* as also *study of scriptures* is *called austerity of speech.*

The philosopher's stone transforms iron into gold without reducing its shape or weight. In the same way, his speech is so guileless that one is pleased to hear it without being hurt. Just as the watering of a tree helps grass to grow in its vicinity, so his speech addressed to a particular individual becomes beneficial to all. A sip from the river of nectar makes one immortal, a dip in it removes sin and afflictions and the tongue savours its sweetness. In the same way his talk removes in discrimination and brings one realisation of one's true Self. One is never bored by hearing it often, as one never becomes tired of sipping nectar (216-220). He talks only when somebody accosts him; otherwise he is engaged in the study of the Vedas or in muttering the name of God. He installs all the three Vedas in the shrine of his speech and makes his organ of speech, as it were, a seminary of Vedic studies. The name of either Lord Shiva or of Lord Vishnu or any other God ever remains on the tip of his tongue. These are what are known as the austerities of the speech. Now I shall tell you the characteristics of the austerities of the mind, so said Lord Krishna, the Lord of the guardians of the world.

16. *Serenity of mind, gentleness, silence, self-control and purity of the heart are called austerities of the mind.*

Like the lake without waves, the sky without clouds, or the garden of sandalwood trees without serpents (221-225) or the full moon without its phases, or the king without anxiety or the milky sea without the Mandara mountain, his mind remains steady in the Supreme Self free from entanglements. He realises his own Self like light without heat, food without fat or the sky without space. Just as the benumbed limbs are not afflicted by cold, so he is rid of his fickle nature. Then his mind becomes clear and full of love like the unchanging and spotless moon's disc (226-230). In this state he does not feel the hardship of dispassion, his mind becomes free from desire and fear and there remains only the warmth of Self-knowledge. The mouth which was used to give instruction on the scripture does not now use the faculty of speech and observes silence. Just as the salt, when dropped in water, which is its original state, becomes merged in it, so the mind, having realised the Self, loses its essential nature. How then could emotions and other tendencies arise in such a mind? How could his mind rush along the road of the senses and reach the town of sense-objects? Then the tendencies of the mind become pure in the way the palm of a person is free from hair. (231-235) O Arjuna, when the mind reaches this state, it is said to possess the austerity of the mind. Such are the characteristics of the austerity of the mind. I have explained to you the three classes of austerities, viz., of body, speech and mind. I shall now tell you how this threefold austerity gets transformed because of its association with the three *gunas.* Bring to bear upon it your powerful intellect and listen.

17. *This three-fold austerity, performed with supreme faith by self- controlled persons without the expectation of a reward is said to be of sattva quality.*

O wise Arjuna, you should practise this three-fold austerity with full faith, dropping all desire for its fruit (236-240). When this three-fold austerity is performed faithfully with a pure mind, the wise call it *sattvic* austerity.

18. *That austerity performed with ostentation to gain respect, honour and homage, is declared to be of rajas quality; it is unstable and transient.*

This austerity is also performed to secure the top-ranking position in society or the top-most honour in the three worlds by depriving others or a seat of honour in the audience or at a feast or to win universal praise. It is also practised with the motive that people should come to see him, seek his support to the exclusion of others and render homage to him and that he alone should be able to enjoy all the important pleasures of life (241-245). Just as a deformed person puts on a glittering dress (to hide his deformity), he performs the austerity sanctimoniously to enhance his own importance. The austerity which is undertaken with the desire of securing riches and respect is known as *rajasic* austerity. When the teats of a cow big with young are infested with worms, it yields no milk after calving. The

field does not yield any harvest after its standing crop is allowed to be grazed by cattle. In the same way the austerities undertaken for the sake of publicity become futile. Then seeing that his austerities are fruitless, he leaves them half-way and is not steadfast in performing them (246-250). The unseasonal clouds which appear in the sky make the whole world resound with their thunder, yet do they last long? In the same way the *rajasic* austerity proves barren and its practice does not last long. But if that austerity is of *tamas* quality, then it does not lead to renown in this world or heaven.

19. *The austerity, which is practised under a wrong notion with self-torture, or the destruction of others, is said to be of 'tamas quality.*

    O Archer, some persons out of foolishness, treat their body as an enemy and perform sacrifices in the following way. Some apply the flame of the five sacred fires *(panchagni)* and scorch the body like firewood. (251-255) Some keep a pan on their head and burn fragrant gum in it, or pierce their backs with iron hooks or scorch their bodies by keeping blazing fire around themselves. They suspend breathing and observe fasts, or with heads hanging downwards they inhale smoke or remain standing in water as cold as ice upto their neck or tear out their own flesh, sitting on a rock or a bank. O Dhananjaya, they perform austerities through self-torture for causing harm to others. A big and heavy boulder dislodged from its position from a mountain rolls down with a crash, gets broken into smithereens and crushes whatever comes in the way (256-260). In the same way they carry on austerities by tormenting the body, in order to outdo persons who are happy and prominent. O Arjuna, that, which is evil and full of self-torture is *tamasic* austerity. Thus, I have explained to you the austerities of three kinds based on the three *gunas.* I shall tell you, as the occasion demands, how charity it also of three kinds because of the three *gunas.* Now hear about the *sattvic* charity. (261-265)

20. *Alms given with the idea that it ought to be given to one who cannot return the favour, at the right place and time and to a deserving person – that charity is known to be of sattvic quality.*

    He gives with due regard something in charity out of the income earned by him by performing his duty. Sometimes if good seed is available, there is a dearth of good soil and water: similar is the case in regard to charity also. If a precious stone comes to hand, one is in want of gold for making a socket for it, and if both are available, a beautiful body to wear that ornament is lacking. Only good luck brings together a festive occasion, the visits of dear ones and wealth. In the same way when the sattva quality comes to help charity, there assemble automatically suitable place and time, wealth and a person fit to receive the gift (266-270). In order to make suitable charities, one should repair to Kurukshetra, Kashi or similar holy

place. In that sacred place, one should choose an auspicious occasion such as an eclipse of the sun or the moon. At such a time and place, one should select a deserving person, who is purity incarnate. One should contact a worthy Brahmin, who is the abode of good qualities and the dwelling place of the Vedas and give him gifts of money by surrendering one's rights in it. Just as a wife surrenders her person to her dear husband with modesty (271-275) or one returns the deposit kept with him in trust to the depositor and becomes free from his obligation, or a page offers humbly a roll of betel leaves to the king, so he should give in charity land etc. to a brahmin in a disinterested spirit without expectation of its fruit. He should select such a person for giving charity as is incapable of returning it in any form. A person receives no reply if he accosts the sky, he does not see his reflection in the mirror if he sees into its rear side, does not get the ball in his hand with a rebound, if he dashes it against water (276-280). He expects no return if he feeds a bull dedicated to God or if he grants a favour to an ungrateful person. In the same way, he should ensure that the charity is given to one, who does not return it in any form and should not entertain in his mind a feeling of distinction between him as the donor and the donee. O great warrior, the charity given under such favourable conditions is known as the *sattvic* charity and is the best of all charities. Alms given under suitable conditions such as place, time and a worthy recipient is flawless and just charity.

21. *But that which is given grudgingly in order to get a favour in return or with the hope of a reward – that charity is known to be of rajas quality.*

    Just as one feeds the cow for its milk, or sows the seed after constructing a grain-cellar to store the grain (281-285) or invites relations to a function in order to get presents, or gives presents to a married woman who has taken a religious vow (not to accept such presents) or to lend money after recovering interest in advance, or charges a fee from a patient before treating him, so charity is given with a view to gain some advantage. Charity of this type is *rajasic* charity. If one meets an itinerant deserving Brahmin on his way and has no hope of receiving anything in return, he gives him a pice (a small coin) in charity and makes him pray for the atonement of the sins not only of himself but also of the members of his family (286-290) or he gives gifts to a Brahmin expecting the reward of enjoyments in heaven. But the gifts given are so scanty that they are hardly enough for a single meal, and when the donee leaves - with that paltry gift, he thinks that he has sustained a loss and feels as though he has been cheated of all his possessions. O wise Arjuna, know that this charity given with this mental attitude is *rajasic* charity.

22. *But alms given to the undeserving at the wrong time and place, without hospitality and with contempt is said to be of tamas quality.*

Now alms are given literally out of moneys secured by theft during the evening or at night, in the habitations of barbarians, in the forest, in the rustic regions, in camps or in the meeting place of the town {291-295). These alms are also given to bards, jugglers, harlots, gamblers or sorceresses out of infatuation. They are infatuated with the beauty and skill of the dancing women, and the praise offered to them by the bards lingers in their minds. Besides the intoxicating smell of flowers and scents turns them into infatuated kings of ghosts. Thus they give in charity riches secured by robbing others in the same way, as persons of low caste open free eating-places. Alms given in this way are *tamasic* charities. Now hear of another kind of charity which takes place by a lucky chance. (296-300) Just as an insect bores a piece of wood and by chance carves letters upon it or a crow is caught in the hands while a person claps them, so when a *tamasic* person happens to find himself at a holy place at an auspicious time and a deserving person comes to beg alms from him, seeing his prosperous look, he resolves to give him something out of vanity. But lacking in faith the *tamasic* person does not bow to him and does not offer him hospitality himself or through another in the form of water (arghya) or a seat. Then why talk of doing homage to him with sandal paste and consecrated rice? In this way the *tamasic* person is rude to the person who begs and dismisses him unceremoniously like a debtor by placing something on his palm and addresses him rudely (301- 305). Whatever he gives, he gives after counting it and gets rid of him by talking to him in a humiliating and insulting tone. Charity given in this way which results only in expense, is called *tamasic* charity. I have thus explained to you the characteristics of *sattvic, rajasic* and *tamasic* charity.

O Arjuna, if only *sattvic* actions can free one from the bonds of worldly existence, you may raise a doubt and ask as to why I have described to you the faulty actions (306-310). But one cannot get hold of a buried treasure without driving away the goblin sitting on it or one cannot kindle the fire without suffering smoke to start with. In the same way what is wrong if I remove the veil of *rajas* and *tamas* quality obscuring the *sattva* quality? I have mentioned in the last verses that the actions from faith to charities are all pervaded by the three *gunas.* While in fact, I had not thought of mentioning the other two *gunas,* I had to do so to show the sattva quality clearly. When a thing occurs along with two other things, it can be seen clearly. When the two are eliminated, as evening becomes clear after the close of the day and before night-fall (311-315). So when the rajas and *tamas* qualities are avoided, *sattva* quality alone is attained in its noblest aspect. So I had to mention the characteristics of *-rajas* and *tamas* qualities in order to show you clearly the *sattva* quality. You should, therefore, take recourse to the *sattva* quality by abandoning the other two and accomplish your object. So perform all your actions including sacrificial rites with the help of *sattva* quality and attain to your pristine nature. If the sun is there to show you, is there anything which you cannot

see? In the same way if there is *sattva* quality to guide you, how will your actions not yield the fruit? It is true that the *sattva* quality does possess this power, and yet that which conduces to liberation (316-320) is something else. When one secures the aid of this thing, one steps into the domain of deliverance. Even if one has pure gold of the highest quality (fifteen annas in a rupee), it serves as currency only if it bears the royal insignia. There may be pure, cool and fragrant water, which gives pleasure; but it becomes holy when it is connected with a holy stream. However big a stream might be, it gains access to the sea only if it joins a big river. In the same way, that which removes the obstacles in the way of one seeking deliverance with the help of *sattvic* actions, is entirely different. (321-325) After hearing this, Arjuna could not contain his eagerness within himself and said, "O Lord. Kindly tell me what it is." Then the merciful Lord said, "I shall now tell you how a *sattvic* person secures this gem in the form of emancipation.

23. *Om Tat Sat, this is known as the three-fold designation of Brahman; by that the Vedas, the Brahmanas and sacrifices were ordained of old.*

The Supreme Brahman without beginning, which is the resting place of the whole universe, has a triple name. Truly speaking, it has no name or caste; but the Vedas have given it a name, so that persons who live in the darkness of ignorance may be able to identify it. A child is born without a name; but it answers and gets up, when it is called by a name given to it (326-330). When people tormented by the worries of the world approached Brahman with their grievances, the name by which they call it and which evokes a response from it is its symbolic name. In order to end the glum silence of Brahman and to realise it in its non-dual form, the Vedas discovered a sacred formula *(mantra)* out of kindness for the world. If God is called by this symbolic name, he stands in front of the caller, though he is formless. But only those who come upto the level of God Brahma, siting by his side in the city in the form of Upanishads on the summit of the mountain in the form of the Vedas, know this formula. In fact, God Brahma attained the power to create the world through the chanting of this formula (331-335).O great warrior, before the creation of this world, god Brahma was alone and had become batty. He had ceased to recognise me and was unable to create the world. He achieved greatness by chanting this name and acquired the capacity to create the world by contemplation and chanting of this three-syllabic formula. Then he created the brahmins, and after directing them to follow the Vedas, he provided them the means of livelihood in the form of sacrificial rites. Then he created countless beings and gifted them for their livelihood, the three worlds with a hereditary right over them (336-340). Now hear about this formula signifying the name of God which made god Brahma pre-eminent in this world. so said the Lord of Lakshmi.

He added: know that its first syllable is *Orn,* the king of all sacred formulae, its second syllable is *Tat* and the third is *Sat.* In this way, *Om Tat Sat* is the triple name of Brahman. You should smell this beautiful flower of the Upanishads in the form of this name. If you become one with this name and perform *sattvic* actions, emancipation becomes a domestic servant in your house. If a person secures ornaments of camphor through good fortune, he finds it difficult to know how to wear them (341-345). In the same way even if one performs good actions and chants the name of Brahman, he may not know the secret of its proper application as laid down in the scripture. Just as one loses merit by not showing proper respect to saintly persons who visit one's house or one longing to wear beautiful ornaments of gold puts them in a bundle and hangs it round one's neck, so the chanting of the name of God and performance of good actions are of no avail, if one does not know its proper application, consisting of three syllables in performing such action. O Arjuna, there is food and hunger side by side and yet if an infant does not know how to eat it, it starves (346-350). Or oil, wick and fire may be all available at one place, still, O warrior, if their use is unknown, no light can be had. So even when there is timely action and the appropriate formula *(mantra)* comes to mind; yet they are of no use without the knowledge of their proper application. I shall now tell you, how one should properly apply the three syllabic names of Brahman.

24. *Therefore, by uttering the syllable Om, acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity are begun as prescribed by the knower of Brahman.*

The three syllables of this name of Brahman should be used at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of every action. O Arjuna, by using this method, the knowers of Brahman have become one with Brahman (351-355). According to the prescription of the religious texts, they do not abstain from performing sacrifices and other rites in order to attain unity with Brahman. They first meditate on *Om* by stamping its nature on their mind and then pronouncing it with their tongue, commence their action. This utterance at the commencement of action is as valuable as a lamp with a steady light in darkness or the company of a strong man in the forest. The knowers of Brahman get the Brahmins to offer sacrifices to titular deities by spending their legitimate earnings (356-360). They offer oblations as prescribed in the three sacred fires, *Ahavaniya, Garhapatya* and *Dakshina.* In this way by performing sacrifices of various kinds, they destroy their limitations *(upadhis)* which they abhore. They give in charity to holy Brahmins. at proper place and Lime, land or riches obtained by them justly. They perform austerities and chasten their bodies by eating on alternate days or observing the *chandrayana* vow every alternate month. In this way, if sacrifices, charity and austerities, while are well known as the means causing bondage, are performed after uttering *Om,* they conduce easily to emancipation (361-365). We can cross the sea on

boats, which seem heavy on land. In the same way, with the help of this God's name one gets release from the bonds of action. So sacrifices, charities, austerities and other rites are commenced with the utterance of *Om.* When these actions show signs of coming to fruition, then the second syllable *Tat* is brought into operation.

25. By *uttering Tat and without seeking award, the various acts of sacrifice and austerity, as also acts of charity cue performed by those desiring liberation.*

That which is beyond the world and which is witness to all things is the Supreme Brahman known by the name *Tat.* They (the seekers) should bear in mind that it is the origin of all. meditate upon its essential nature and pronounce it loudly and clearly (366-370). Then they should say, "We dedicate all these actions along with their fruit to the Brahman represented by the word *Tat,* with nothing left for us to enjoy". Thus by surrendering all actions to the Brahman known as *Tat,* they should repudiate all responsibility for these actions by uttering the ' words 'not mine". Now the action commenced by uttering the word *'Om'* and surrendered to God by uttering the word *Tat'* may seem to have become one with Brahman, but it is not so. This is because the egoistic feeling of duality still remains in the doer of the action. Salt certainly gets dissolved in water, but its saltish taste remains behind. To think that action has become one with Brahman is itself duality (371-375). So long as this consciousness of duality lasts, the mundane existence continues to daunt us, so said the Lord with his own mouth and this is also declared by the Vedas. The syllable *Sat* is reserved for the purpose that one should not feel onself as distinct from Brahman, but should experience one's unity with it. When the action begun by uttering the word *Om* and continued by uttering the word *Tat* becomes only one with Brahman with the elimination of the egoistic feeling that 'I am the doer', it is praised as right action. I shall explain now how the word *Sat* is specially applied in regard to right action.

26. *The word Sat is used to decide that which* is *and that which is good; likewise, O Partha, the word Sat is used for any praiseworthy act.*

By the use of this syllable Sat, the counterfeit coin in the form of the illusory world gets destroyed and one experiences the flawless nature of Existence (376-380). This Sat undergoes no change at any place or time; it always abides in the form of the supreme Self. As the visible world is illusory, it is not classed under Sat, which is known only as the Supreme Self. That which becomes one with all-pervasive Brahman and by the use of word Sat results in the experience of unity by eliminating the duality of the doer, is the right action. That action which becomes united with Brahman through the utterance of Om and Tat gets dissolved and remains

as Sat, pure and simple. One should know this secret application of the term Sat, so said Shri Hari.

(Jnanadeva says), It is not I who says this (381-385). If I say so it will be sullied with the taint of duality in respect of Shri Hari. So I say that this is what the Lord has said. This syllable *Sat* is also beneficial to *sattvic* action in another way. Even if these good actions are performed well according to one's qualification, they may become defective in some way. Just as when a body has a defective limb, its activity comes to a stop or if a chariot is deficient in one part, it comes to a dead halt, so even if an action is right on the whole, it may become bad being deficient in some quality (386-390). In this situation, with the help of the words *Om* and *Tat* the *Sat* syllable restores the defective action. It removes the defect by its power of *sattva* and brings it to perfection. Like divine medicine which is given to a patient or help rendered to a despondent person, this syllable *Sat* helps in making defective action perfect in all respects.

Otherwise it so happens that due to heedlessness action takes to the wrong path, transgressing the precepts -. of scriptures, even as the wayfarer sometime misses his way or the connoisseur becomes confused. In such cases. is there any limit to what may happen (391-395)? In this manner if the indiscriminate action transgresses the prescribed rules, then it tends to become evil action. When the Sat syllable which is better than the other two is employed, it turns the bad action into good action. O warrior, the application of syllabic word *Sat* is beneficial to faulty action like the rubbing of the philosopher's stone on iron, the meeting of a stream with the river Ganga or a shower of nectar on a dead person such is the greatness of the *Sat* syllable. In the way, if you understand the secret of the *Sat* syllable and utter that name properly, you will realise that it is nothing but Brahman (396-400). The syllables *Om Tat Sat* take the seeker to that abode which illumines this visible world. Thus *Om Tat Sat* is the name which shows the inner essence of pure Brahman, which is without attributes. But just as the sky is the support of itself, so Brahman supports its name *Om Tat Sat.* Just as when the Sun rises on the horizon, it illumines itself, so the utterance of this name brings liberation. So know that this is not the triple name of Brahman, but Brahman itself, and so whatever actions you will perform (401-405),

27. *In sacrifice, austerity and charity steadfastness is said to be good; and action undertaken for the sake of the Supreme is verily called good.*

Whether consisting of sacrifice, charity and austerities, although too rigorous, may reach successful termination or develop some defect and remain incomplete. But if they are dedicated to Brahman, they become one with it in the same way as gold produced from iron with the touch of philosophic stone, when tested, is seen to be pure gold and no one can

talk of it as impure. Just as the rivers after joining the sea cannot be identified separately, so the actions do not show any distinctions as imperfect or perfect. In this way, O wise Arjuna. I have described to you the power of the name of Brahman, I have also explained to you the different applications of the three-syllabic name, when taken singly (406-410). Have you now realised the secret of the name of Brahman? If this faith increases in your mind, you will get rid of the bonds of birth and death. If you perform action by the application of this *Sat* syllable in the best way possible, the action will become perfect according to the injunctions of the Vedas.

28. *Whatever sacrifice is offered, charity given, austerity practised, and whatever is done without faith,- is said to be 'asat'; it is of no use here or after death.*

If one gives up this path of faith and performs, on the strength of obduracy, numerous sacrifices, gives in charity the whole earth full of gems, practises thousands of austerities, standing on the toes (411-415), or constructs lakes as big as the sea, all that is of no avail. Like rain fallen on rocks, oblations made into ashes, or like an embrace given to a shadow, or the slapping of the sky, all actions undertaken become fruitless. Just as by crushing pebbles in an oil-mill, one gets neither oil nor oil-cake, such action is worthless. If a person ties up potsherds in the hem of his garment and goes on a journey in his country or to a foreign land, he suffers starvation (416-420). In the same way if actions do not bring him happiness in this world, how could he expect it in the next world? So any transaction undertaken in this world without faith in the name of God, is so much labour lost in this and the next world.

So said Shri Krishna. the Lord of Lakshmi, the bravest among warriors, the lion who destroys the elephant in the form of sin. the sun who dispels the darkness in the form of three-fold misery. Like the moon who gets lost in the moonshine, Arjuna was drowned in the bliss of Self. O King, this war is verily a merchant with the sharp arrows as his weights, with which he measures the flesh of the lives fallen on the battlefield. In such a terrible crisis how did Arjuna come to enjoy the kingdom of bliss? Such a good fortune has not become the lot of any other person. Sanjaya said, O king of Kurus, I am enthralled to see such merit in the enemy. He has become as if our preceptor and brought us happiness. For had he not asked any questions of the Lord, would the latter have disclosed the secret of his heart and how could we have got a glimpse of the absolute Truth? We were going through the rounds of births and deaths in the darkness of ignorance, but Arjuna brought us to the temple of self-knowledge. He has lavished so much favour upon us. that I deem him as our preceptor like sage Vyasa (426-430). Then Sanjaya said to himself, "Such extravagant praise of Arjuna may displease Dhritarashtra, and so it is better to stop it".

So dropping this subject, Sanjaya began to narrate what Arjuna next asked Lord Krishna. Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivritti says, "I shall tell you now what Sanjaya narrated, so please give me your attention". (431-433)

Chapter Eighteenth

O my Master! You are pure and all auspicious to your devotees, glory to you, You are the strong wind which dispels the clouds of birth and old age. O powerful God, you destroy all that is inauspicious and dispense the fruit of the scriptures. You are perfect and love your devotees who are free from sensuous desires. You destroy the play of time and are beyond all modifications. O God, you are motionless and you have become big-bellied by gulping the fickle minds of your devotees. To create the world over and over again is your loving sport. You possess pure nature and inspire happiness. You are destroyer of all sins and the cause of this universe. (1-5) O Lord, you are self-illumined and support the clouds in the form of worlds like the sky. You are the first pillar on which is erected the pavilion of the created world, and you are also its dissolution. Free from the conditioning factors, you are the elephant which destroys the garden of empirical knowledge. You are also the sea of compassion which destroys desire and pride with the aid of self-control and restraint of the senses. God, you are one and single, who averts the pride of the snake in the form of desire. You are the lamp in the temple of devotees' hearts and the redresser of their worldly troubles and tribulations. O Lord, you are simply unique and you love your devotees who have become perfected in their dispassion. You are beyond the sway of Maya, but are accessible to your devotees and fit for their devotion.

O Master, you are the wish-yielding tree who showers gifts beyond imagination and you are the fertile soil in which grows the seed of the tree in the form of Self-knowledge (6-10). With what words can I describe you who are devoid of any attribute? I know that the adjectives with which I try to describe you do not represent your true nature. I, therefore, feel embarrassed to praise you. The sea is said to have its limits; but this fame of its lasts only t0 the rise of the moon. The moonstone does not ooze and offer oblations to the moon, because it is the moon which makes it ooze. The trees do not know how the advent of spring makes them put forth foliage (11-15). Just as the lotus creeper blossoms at the first touch of the sun's rays without embarrassment or the salt dissolves at the touch of water, so when I think of you, I forget myself. I am reduced to the state of a person who belches again and again after a satisfying full meal. You have made me forgetful of myself and crazy about singing your praise. If I were to give up my body-consciousness and praise your qualities, it will mean that I am making a distinction between the qualities and qualified. But you are a single entity, so how can I make such a distinction? Is it not

be to keep the pearl intact instead of cutting it into two parts and then rejoining them (16-20)? To call you the parent of the world is not to praise you, because it would mean that I defile you by ascribing to you the attribute of possessing me as your child. I could call myself your servant, but how can I falsely attribute proprietorship to you? How can I describe you in a form which is defiled by conditioning factors? O Master, if I call you indiscriminately as the Self, it would mean that I am expelling you from my interior. For this reason, I see no scope to praise you in this world or to decorate you , with any ornament other than silence. Therefore, say nothing constitutes your praise, to do nothing is your worship and to associate with you is to negate one's personality by getting merged in you. (21-25) Like the chatter of an infatuated person is this my praise of you; so bear it, O Master, patiently with a mother's love. Now put your firm seal on my discourse on the Gita, so that it will be acceptable to this audience. Then Shri Nivrittinath said, 'Why do you need to say all this again and again? Is it necessary rub the philosopher's stone with iron over and over again to turn it into gold?" On this Jnanadeva said, "I have received your grace. O Master, now listen to the interpretation of the Gita, which I am going to narrate.

Now the Gita is a temple studded with jewels, of which ' this chapter is the very pinnacle constructed with the philosopher's stones in the form of insights. It will instruct you in the interpretation of the Gita (26-30). There is a custom in this world that if you .get a vision of the pinnacle from a distance, it is as good as seeing the deity in the temple. The same parallel holds here also. For if you read carefully this chapter, you comprehend the whole teaching of the Gita. It is for this reason that I say that Vedavyasa has composed this chapter as a pinnacle to the temple of the Gita. Just as after the erection of the pinnacle, no construction work remains to be done, this eighteenth chapter suggests that with it the Gita has come to an end. Vyasa was a skillful artisan, who excavated the mountains of gems in the form of the Vedas and formed rocky plains in the form of the Upanishads (31-35). From this excavation became available many well-shaped stones of different shapes in the form of duty (dharma), wealth (artha) and passionate love (kama). With these he built a big rampart in the form of the Mahabharata and in that he selected with great skill the polished stones in the form of the dialogue between Lord Krishna and Arjuna relating to the knowledge of the Self. Then using the plummet in the form of renunciation and, taking the help of other religious texts, he fixed the layout of the temple. On this cleared ground, the temple building was' constructed with fifteen stories in the form of fifteen chapters. The Chapter XVI provided a dome on the top of the temple, while Chapter XVII furnished a round frame for building the pinnacle thereon (36-40). Then sage Vyasa set up securely the pinnacle in the form of Chapter XVIII and unfurled the flag of the Gita on it. So all the previous chapters form the floors one over the other. The present chapter is indicating their

completion. This pinnacle testifies that the temple is finished and nothing remains to be done. So this eighteenth chapter gives a clear exposition of the Gita from beginning to the end. Thus sage Vyasa skilfully completed the temple in the form of the Gita and has come to the rescue of all beings in every way. Some walk round the temple by reciting the Gita, while others take shelter in the shade and hear the Gita recited (41-45). Still others take the roll of betel leaves and a pice in the form of attention and enter the sanctuary of the temple in the form of the knowledge of the Gita. The last-named get access to Lord Krishna through the knowledge of the Self. But all of them get the same access to the temple of, salvation. In a dinner given by a rich person, all those seated at the head or at the end of a row get the same kind of sweet dish. In the same way all attain liberation by hearing, by reciting or knowing the meaning of the Gita. So as this, Gita is the temple sacred for the devotees of Vishnu and the eighteenth chapter is its pinnacle, I have made this distinction deliberately.

Now, I shall explain to you how this chapter is linked with – Chapter XVII (46-50). Even though the currents of the rivers Ganga and Yamuna are different, they are one because of their common element, water. In the case of Lord Shiva in the form of half male and half female (*Ardhanarinateshwara*), although the male and female forms have distinctive features, they have one and the same body. The phases of the moon go on increasing' during the bright half of the lunar month, yet they do not appear distinct in the full moon. So although the stanzas appear different because of their four parts and the chapters appear different because of their different stanzas, they form a unity in regard to their import. Just as the thread on which gems are woven is the same (51-55), or the necklace made up of many pearls has the same luster, or the flowers and their wreaths can be counted on Angers, but not so their fragrance, so is." the case with the stanzas and the chapters (i.e. they point to the same common Truth). The Gita consists of seven hundred stanzas divided into eighteen chapters, but the theme taught by the God is the same without any difference. I have given the exposition of the Gita without departing from his meaning. I am now explaining the eighteenth chapter also on the same lines.

At the end of Chapter XVII, the Lord had said (56-60), "O Arjuna, any actions performed without uttering the name of Brahman prove worthless." Hearing these words of the Lord, Arjuna felt happy. He thought that it was good that the Lord disparaged the activist. Poor fellow blinded by ignorance, he could not realise God; then how could he know the secret of the name of Brahman? So long as the qualities of rajas and tamas are not got rid of, his faith remains feeble; then how could it remain fixed in the name of Brahman? Just as embracing a spear or running on a horizontally-suspended rope, or playing with a female cobra (6l-65) is fatal to life, so these actions are noxious, as they lead to the insurmountable

dangers of birth and death. If luckily the actions are properly performed, then they conduce to knowledge, otherwise they lead to hell. There are many obstacles in the successful execution of works; so how can a man of action get his chance to attain liberation? It would be, therefore. better to abandon all actions altogether in order to get rid of the suffering resulting from action and adopt faultless renunciation. (66-70)

Renunciation and relinquishment are the two paths which are free from the fear of being affected by actions and which conduce to knowledge. They are incantations of invocation to knowledge, or are the fields of growing knowledge, or are the very ropes for hauling up knowledge. So, I should request the Lord to explain which of these two paths can bring salvation. Deliberating like this, Arjuna asked Lord Krishna to enlighten him about the nature of these two. Chapter XVIII contains the reply of the Lord to this question of Arjuna. In this way according to the law of cause and effect, one chapter gives birth to another.

Now, listen well to the question which Arjuna asked. What the Lord said at the end of the last chapter made Arjuna said. (71-75) He had understood perfectly well the knowledge of the Self imparted by the Lord. Yet he could not bear see that the Lord remained silent without resuming his talk. Even when the calf has drunk the milk to its heart's content, it does not wish to be separated from the cow. Such is the case of single-minded love. That one should wish to talk to a beloved person without cause, to see and go on seeing him or her, love expands with such experience of love – love is of this kind. Arjuna was verily love incarnate, so he felt miserable at the Lord's silence (76-80). Just as one looks into the mirror and enjoys seeing one's own form in it, so Arjuna was enjoying the highest spiritual reality i.e. Brahman through the medium of this conversation. When the dialogue ended, this enjoyment also came to an end. How, could Arjuna, who had become accustomed to this blissful experience, bear to see it stopped? On the plea, therefore, of questioning him about the distinctive natures of relinquishment and renunciation, he reopened the folded cloth. So this is not the eighteenth chapter, but the Gita itself in one chapter. When the calf makes the cow to release its milk, how could there be any delay? So when the Gita was about to end, Arjuna brought it back to its former state. Has it ever happened that the master does not reply when questioned by his servant (81-85)? Then Arjuna said, "Let the Lord hear my request."

Arjuna said:

1. *I wish to know the essence of renunciation, O mighty-armed (Krishna), as also relinquishment, O Hrishikesha, severally, O slayer of (demon) Keshi*

O Lord, in truth, renunciation and relinquishment seem to connote the same meaning as 'combination' and 'combine' mean the same thing. I,

therefore, think that both these words mean the same thing, namely relinquishment. If they have any distinctive meanings, please explain them to me. Then Lord Krishna said," O Arjuna, they are two different words, but if they appear to you to convey the same meaning, that too is true in one sense (86- 90). It is true that both these words are used in the sense of relinquishment. But they are distinct in the sense that renunciation is the abandonment of all actions, while relinquishment is the abandonment of the fruit of actions. Now I shall explain to you the actions of which the fruit should be abandoned and the actions, which should be abandoned totally. Listen to it carefully. Whereas numerous trees grow of their own accord in the forests and on the mountains, the paddy or garden plants do not grow there. Grass grows plentifully without sowing seeds, but the paddy seedlings can be obtained only from the soil, which is burnt. (91-95) Even if the body grows - naturally, ornaments have to be fashioned. Even if the river becomes available naturally, a well has to be sunk. So the day-to-day and occasional actions take place in the natural course; but the optional (*kamya*) actions are not undertaken without a motive.

The blessed Lord said:

2. *Renouncing of actions motivated by desire, the wise know to be renunciation; the abandonment of the fruits of all actions, the learned declare, is relinquishment.*

Actions prompted by desire involve the performance of sacrifices such as the horse-sacrifice, sinking of wells with or without steps, laying out pleasure gardens, or making grants of lands or new towns, observing diverse vows with ceremonies – all these actions consisting of sacrifices and social works *(Ishtapurta)* spring from desire. Such actions involving enjoyment of their fruit lead to bondage (96-100). O Arjuna, an embodied person cannot avoid the occasions of birth and death. One cannot escape his destiny (lit. what is written on his forehead), nor can he wash off his complexion. In the sake way, one cannot evade the experience of the fruit of a motivated action, as one cannot become free unless he pays off his debt. Even if a motivated action gets casually performed without any motive, even then it has the natural power to make one experience its fruit. This is in the same way as a mock fight with blunt weapons causes an injury, or jaggery put in the mouth tastes sweet, or the foot placed on a live coal thinking it to be ashes, burns (101-105). Therefore, the seeker should not perform such actions even out of fun. Just as one should vomit poison winch has entered the stomach, one should abandon motivated actions. Such abandonment is called renunciation, so said Lord Krishna, who dwells in our hearts and is the witness of all our actions. Then he added, just as the abandonment of riches removes fear of thieves, so the renunciation of motivated actions destroys all desires in toto.

The occasional works are those which are performed on the festive occasions of solar or lunar eclipse, or at the time of offerings to the dear departed (106-110) or in extending hospitality to a guest. The clouds thunder in the sky during the rainy season, or the trees get into blossoms during the spring, the body becomes comely in youth, or the moonstone oozes at the touch of the moonbeams or the lotuses bloom in the sunlight. In all this whatever exists originally is revealed; nothing new is created. In the same way, when obligatory work has to be performed on special occasions, it receives the high-sounding name of 'occasional' (naimittika) action and whatever requires to be done in the morning, at noon or in the evening, know that to be the obligatory work (nitya). Just as the eye-sight does not contain anything extra added to it (111-115), or the feet have their natural movement or the lamp has its natural light, or the sandal has its natural fragrance, this action has its natural prerogative. This, O Partha, is called the obligatory action. In this way, I have explained to you both the obligatory and occasional actions. Some consider these actions as barren, as they have to be necessarily performed. But as a meal satisfies hunger and makes one contented, so these actions become fruitful (116-120). When an alloyed gold is burnt 1n Are, its alloy gets burnt and it becomes pure gold; such is the case with these actions. Because of them the mental defects are destroyed, the spiritual status of the doer improves and he attains to a perfect state. Even though these actions come to such good fruition, their fruit should be abandoned like the child born under an inauspicious star. The spring makes the creepers blossom and the mango trees bear abundant foliage, but goes without touching them. In the same way one should perform these obligatory actions without transgressing their limits, but treat their fruit as worth forsaking like vomit. (121-125) The learned men call this abandonment of the fruit of action as relinquishment. So I have explained to you the nature of both renunciation (samnyasa) and relinquishment (*tyaga*).

When the motivated action is renounced, it does not bind and the prohibited action does not get performed because of its prohibition. Just as when the head is cut off, the body falls down, so with the relinquishment of fruit the obligatory action gets destroyed. As with the harvesting of the crop the growth of the plant stops, so when all actions are destroyed with the relinquishment of their fruit, the knowledge of the Self comes in search of such relinquishes. In this way, those who relinquish the fruits of all obligatory actions and renounce the optional actions, they become fit for the knowledge of the Self. (126-130) If any try to abandon the actions somehow, they will not be able to do so, but will get more and more involved in actions. If a physician prescribes medicine without a proper diagnosis of the disease, the medicine proves fatal like poison. Or if one does not partake of food, will he not die of hunger? Therefore, one should not give up action, which is not fit to be abandoned and one should not pursue out of greed that action which is fit to be

abandoned. The abandonment of action without knowing the trick of relinquishment becomes a burden; but men who are indifferent to the world do not even take a look at such actions.

3. *Some thinkers say that action should be abandoned, being tainted. Acts of sacrifice, charity and austerity should not be abandoned, so say others.*

   Some say that action leads to bondage, as one can never get rid of desire for the fruit of action. If a person calls a naked person nude, the latter in turn calls him quarrelsome (131-135). One who is fond of food gobbles all kinds of food and suffering from indigestion Ands fault with it. A leper, instead of blaming his rotting body, gets angry with the flies which hover round him. In that way the feeble-minded persons, who are greedy of the fruit of action and reluctant to relinquish it, denounce action as wicked and favour its total renunciation. Others declare that actions such as sacrifice ought to be performed; otherwise there is no other means for the purification of the mind. If one wishes to bring about early purification of the mind, one should not be sluggish in performing actions. If one wishes to purify gold, one should not neglect to burn it in the crucible. If one wishes to see his face in a copper mirror he should not neglect to keep ashes ready to polish it. (136-140] If one wishes to get his clothes washed, he should not call the laundry-trough unclean. In the same way, even if actions cause trouble, one should not abandon them. For can anybody get tasty food to eat without cooking it? Some people advocate the performance of actions by such arguments. In this way, relinquishment of actions has become the subject of controversy. I, therefore, wish to explain to you the true nature of relinquishment and clear the controversy.

4. *Hear then My conclusion regarding relinquishment, O Bharata. For relinquishment, O tiger among men is declared to be three-fold.*

   O Arjuna, this relinquishment of fruit is of three kinds. I shall now explain to you these kinds with their distinctive features (141-145). Even though there are three kinds of relinquishment, their gist is the same, which you should bear well in mind. I am all-knowing and so hear my definite opinion on this matter. The seeker, who is diligent about his salvation, should by all means act thus.

5. *Acts of sacrifice, charity and austerities ought to be performed, not renounced; for sacrifice, charity and austerities purify the wise.*

   Just as a wayfarer should not give up walking, so one should not abandon the obligatory duties such as sacrifice, charity and austerities. Just as the search cannot be abandoned until the lost thing is recovered, or the dish-plate cannot he set aside until after a full meal (146-150), or the boat cannot be abandoned in the mid- stream, or the banana tree cannot be cut

before it bears fruit or the light cannot be extinguished before finding the required thing, so one should not be indifferent to performing sacrifices etc. until one becomes convinced about the knowledge of the Self. On the contrary, one should perform sacrifices, charity and austerities with greater zeal and diligence. He who walks fast gets time for rest; so performance of duties conduces to freedom from action. If a patient takes medicines regularly, he becomes free from his ailment before long (151-155). In the same way, actions performed early according to the scriptural injunctions destroy the rajas and tamas qualities. Gold treated with acid becomes purified with the elimination of its alloy. So action performed with dedication destroys the rajas and tamas qualities and reveals the majesty of a pure mind. So, O Arjuna, good actions attain the efficacy of the holy water in bringing about purification of existence. The holy water cleanses only the external dirt, but the mental impurities are washed off only through good actions (156-160). Just as a thirsty person should find springs of nectar in a waterless place, or a blind man should receive the luster of the sun in his eyes, or the river itself should come to the rescue of a drowning person or the earth should clasp to her bosom the falling man, or the god of death himself should confer longevity on a dying person, so the actions, O Arjuna, release a person from the bonds of actions. Just as the science of alchemy knows how to convert the poison into a life-saving drug, so there is a skilful way of performing actions in such a way that instead of leading to bondage they conduce to liberation. Now I shall explain to you the device by which actions will destroy themselves (161-165).

6. *But even these actions should be performed O Partha, without attachment and (the desire for) reward. This is my firm and best view*

   When these actions such as sacrifices are being performed according to scriptural rules, he does not become puffed up with pride. If anyone performs a pilgrimage at the cost of another, he cannot boast of having performed the pilgrimage. He who, under the authority of a powerful king, defeats another king and brings him as a captive, cannot feel proud of his conquest. He who swims taking the help of a swimmer cannot boast of being a swimmer'. The sacrificial priest who gives gifts on behalf of the sacrifice cannot take the credit of being the donor. In the same manner, he should perform all obligatory actions from time to time according to the scriptural injunction without the egoistic feeling of being of the doer (166-170). He should not, O Arjuna, crave for the fruit resulting from his action. O winner of wealth, he should, on the contrary, undertake the action without hankering after its fruit, in the same manner, as a wet nurse brings up a child not her own. No one waters a holy fig tree for its fruit; so one should perform actions without desiring their fruit. A cowherd looks after the cows of a village without the desire of their milk, so one should be disinterested in the reward of his actions. A person who performs action in

this way attains to the knowledge of the Self {171-175). My best message to all is that they should perform actions without expectation of a reward and attachment to the body. He who is dead tired of the bonds of existence and is anxious for his deliverance should not transgress this command of mine.

7. *Now to renounce an obligatory function is not proper; its abandonment through delusion is declared to be derived from tamas quality.*

   If a person trips up in the dark, he angrily pierces his nails in his own eyes in the same way a person abandons all actions as they lead to bondage. I call the abandonment as of tamas quality. It is like cutting one's own head angrily on account of a shooting headache. O Arjuna, if the road is rough, one must walk over it anyhow. Does anyone cut off the feet on the ground that the road is bad (176-180)? If hot food is served to a hungry person arid he kicks it away because it is hot, he will have to go without food. A tamas-dominated person does not know, because of delusion, the trick how to destroy the bondage of actions through actions. He, therefore, abandons actions, which fall to his lot according to his natural disposition. Do not allow such a tamas-dominated person even to touch you.

8. *He who abandons work as irksome from fear of physical suffering, his abandonment is based on rajas; and so he does not reap the fruit of relinquishment.*

   Even though he knows his own qualification and the duties to be performed by him, he becomes indifferent to them on the ground that their performance is troublesome. One feels it a burden to carry one's food for use in travel. In the same way action seems difficult when it is begun (181-185). Just as a neem fruit tastes bitter and a myrobalan astringent, so the action seems hard at its commencement and end. The cow gives milk, but it has vicious horns, the chrysanthemum flower grows on a thorny plant and although a meal gives satisfaction, there is the bother of cooking it. In the same way, action entails physical exertion on the part of its agent and so appears difficult in its initial stage. If not, he begins to perform it as his prescribed duty, but drops it as soon as he suffers pain. He says to himself, I am lucky to have such a good thing as the human body; then why should I tax it with work (186-190)? If I have to work to gain happiness, I would much rather do without it. Why not enjoy the pleasures which are already within my grasp? Such relinquishment, O Arjuna, on the ground of physical pain, is rajas-dominated relinquishment. This is also abandonment of work, but it does not bear the fruit of relinquishment. If boiling ghee falls into fire, it does not become an oblation. If a person is drowned, it does not amount to voluntary death by yogic self-immersion but is an accidental death. If one, therefore, gives up his prescribed duties because he is attached to physical comforts, he does not gain the fruit of

relinquishment (191-195). Just as all the stars vanish in the morning light all activity along with its cause, ignorance ceases with the dawn of knowledge and then this relinquishment of actions bears fruit in the form of liberation. The abandonment of action through ignorance does not lead to emancipation and so being rajas-dominated, it is not true relinquishment. Now I shall tell you as the occasion demands, what kind of relinquishment will bring emancipation to you.

9. *When an obligatory duty is performed, O Arjuna, (with the thought) that it ought to be done, without attachment and desire for its fruit, that tyaga is known to be derived from sattva.*

   Now the (*sattvic*) person performs actions which have fallen to his lot according to his status with proper decorum and in accordance with scriptural injunctions (196-200). But he does not perform them with egoistic feeling and does not expect their fruit. To show disrespect to the mother or to entertain passion for her leads to ruin. Therefore one should avoid both these things and render service to her. Does one discard a cow because its mouth is foul? Does one throw away one's favourite fruit because its rind and stone are tasteless? In the same way the egoistic feeling of the doer and the desire for the fruit of action contribute to the bondage of action (201-205). A father never entertains a passion for his daughter; in the same way, he who performs his obligatory actions with complete detachment in these two respects does not suffer misery. This most excellent tree in the form of relinquishment bears a big fruit in the form of emancipation. So it is well-known in the world as sattvic tyaga. Just as one roasts the seeds making that species of tree extinct, so he renounces action by relinquishing its fruit. Just as with the touch of the philosopher's stone both the rust and its black colour disappear, so with the relinquishment of the fruit of action, both rajas and tamas qualities are destroyed. Then with the purification of his sattva, he becomes enlightened in regard to the true nature of the Self. Just as the mirage vanishes as soon as the evening sets in (206-210), the deceptive appearance of the universe like that of the sky (which looks blue without being so) vanishes.

10. *The relinquisher imbued with sattva, who is enlightened and free from doubts, hates not evil action nor is he attached to good action.*

    As the clouds appear and become dissolved in the sky, so whatever actions, good or bad, that he has to perform as a result of his past actions are purified by his vision and so they are incapable of ensnaring him with pleasure and pain. He does not consider any action as auspicious or inauspicious and performs it without a feeling of joy 'or hate as the case may be. He has no misgiving regarding such actions, as one does not doubt about the unreality of things seen in a dream on waking up. (211-

215) He, therefore, does not entertain a sense of duality between the action done and its doer. Then it is known as a sattvic tyaga. If actions are relinquished in this way, they are relinquished entirely. If they are relinquished in any other way, they bring about greater bondage.

11. *Nor indeed can an embodied being renounce actions altogether. He who forgoes the fruit of action is said to be the relinquisher.*

    O Arjuna, they who, having got the body, feel an aversion towards actions are boorish. How can an earthen pot abhore the clay? Can the cloth forsake the yarn? How can the Are feel troubled by its own heat? Can the lamp hate its own light (216-220)? Where can asafoetida find fragrance, if it feels nausea for its bad smell? How can the water exist without its fluidity? In the same way so long as one identifies himself with the body in delusion, is it not a silly idea to forsake action? One can efface the mark of sandal-paste on his forehead put by himself and put it again, but how can one erase ,the lines written on his forehead (one's destiny)? One can at the most forsake the action which is At to be undertaken according to the scriptures, but how could actions natural to the body be relinquished? For a man has to continue the action of breathing, even when asleep and this is so even if he sits quietly doing nothing (221-225). Action dogs the footsteps of a person because of his body and he cannot escape it, whether he is living or dead. There is only one device by which a person can relinquish it. He should not, while performing action, be tempted by the desire for its fruit. If he dedicates fruits of actions to God, he attains to knowledge through his grace. Then just as the true knowledge of a rope removes the delusive knowledge of its being a serpent, so the knowledge of Self destroys ignorance along with actions. If a person forsakes actions in this way, it is true relinquishment and he is the great relinquisher. When a patient goes into a swoon, others think that he is taking rest (226-230). In the same way, if a person gives up action out of fatigue, you may call it rest if you like. But it is like putting up with fisticuffs in order to escape beating with a cudgel. I repeat again that in the three worlds, he is the only true relinquisher, who by relinquishing the fruit of actions, has turned action into non-action.

12. *Undesired, desired and mixed – such is the three-fold fruit, of action; it accrues to the non-relinquisher after death, but never to those who renounce it.*

    Action, O Arjuna, is of three kinds and it is required to be experienced only by those who do not relinquish the desire for the fruit of action. When the father gives away his daughter in marriage saying, 'she is no more mine', he becomes free from his responsibility for her, but the son-in-law .who accepts her becomes entrapped. Those who sell their stocks of poison live happily on their sale-proceeds, but those who purchase it at a heavy price

and swallow it lose their lives (231-235). Action does not bind either him who performs it without egoistic feeling that he is doer or him who relinquishes its fruit. He who desires to obtain the fruit of a tree on the roadside gets it; in the same way, only he who craves for the fruit of action gets it. He who performs actions but relinquishes their fruit is not reborn in any of the three worlds, because all the three worlds are the fruits of actions. Gods, men and the stationary things constitute the world and all the three result from the three kinds of actions. Action is of three kinds, undesired, desired and mixed (236-240). Those who are attached to sensuous pleasures perform evil actions which are prohibited and are reborn into bodies of the very lowest order such as vermin, insects and the earth. This is known as the undesired fruit of action. But those, O Arjuna, who perform religious works as enjoined þ in the scriptures according to their status, attain the bodies of gods such as Indra. This is well-known as the desired fruit of action. But when sweet and sour juices are mixed, they produce a different but more tasty juice (241-245). When the exhalation of breath is stopped through the practice of Yoga, there results its suspension (K*umbhaka*). The mixture of truth and untruth produces a queer combination of the two. So the action which is both auspicious and inauspicious in equal proportions gives rise to the human body. This is the mixed fruit of actions.

Such is the three-fold fruition of action in the world. Those persons who are ensnared by the expectation of the fruit of action have to experience that fruit. One's mouth waters and , one derives great satisfaction while eating hot food. but ultimately it results in disease and death. The friendship of a polished thief is agreeable so long as the forest is not reached. The company of a harlot seems good until one cohabits with her (246-250). So those who perform , work while in the body prosper; but they have to suffer the fruits of their actions after death. When the creditor comes for the repayment of his loan as stipulated, he does not leave the debtor until the loan is recovered; in the same way every being has to experience the fruit of his actions. When a grain falls on the ground from the ear of a corn, it germinates and produces another ear of corn and this process continues - ad infinitum. So when one is experiencing the fruits of his past actions, he goes on performing actions and creating more fruits of action like a person who takes one step after another while walking. A ferry takes passengers from one bank to another and continuously moves between the two banks; in the same way, there is no end to the experience of the fruit of actions (251-255). This experience is ever on the increase, as the action, which ends (sadhya), becomes the means (sadhana) for a fresh action and so those who do not relinquish the fruit of actions become entangled evermore in worldly existence.

On the other hand, just as the jasmine flower blossoms and withers, others relinquishing the fruit of actions make them infructuous. Just as the

consumption of seeds. puts a stop to further agricultural operation, so the relinquishment of the fruit of action stops the future consequences of one's action. Then the knowledge of Self dawns upon one as a result of the purification of his mind and the ambrosial shower of the Guru's grace, and it destroys the misery arising from the notion of duality. The three kinds of fruit which gives rise to the world appearance is destroyed and in this condition, the duality between the experience and the experiencer ceases (256-260). O greatest among warriors, those who have been able to relinquish action in this way through knowledge become free from the sufferings of birth and death. And when their vision, through such relinquishment, reaches the Self, how can the actions appear different to them from the Self? When the wall collapses, the paintings on it also become reduced to dust. Will the darkness of the night outlast the rising of the sun? How can a shadow exist without a figure? If there is no mirror, where will the face get reflected? How can one dream after the sleep is over and will not all the talk whether the dream is true or false become redundant (261-265)? With the ' relinquishment of the fruit of actions, ignorance ceases and then who can receive or dispense the fruits of actions? Then all talk about. actions and their fruits ceases in the case of a relinquisher.

But so long as ignorance exists in the mind, so long as the soul undertakes good or bad actions with the egoistic feeling that he is the doer, and so long as this vision continues to see distinctions among living beings, the notion of duality. O intelligent Arjuna, exists between the Self and the action. just as there is ", distinctness between the East and the West or ' between the, sky and the clouds, the sun and ,," the mirage, the earth and the wind (266-270), or between the river and the rock in it, between the water and the moss which grows on it, or between the lamp and the soot (literally, although both are connected can we call the soot lamp?) , or between the moon and its spots, or between the vision and the eyes, or between the way and the wayfarer, or between the current and the water which flows in it or the mirror and one who looks in it, so is the action distinct : from the Self. But this will happen only if ignorance allows them to be seen as distinct (271-275). The lotus creeper blossoms and suggests thereby that the sun has risen and , make the bees enjoy the honey of its flowers; the same way. the embodied Self performs '. actions for other reasons, which are five in number and I shall describe them now.

13. *Learn, O mighty-armed (Arjuna), from Me these five factors, declared in the Sankhya doctrine for the accomplishment of all works:*

You might be knowing these five causes; for the scriptures have described them with upraised arms. They are proclaimed loudly through the beating of drums in the palace of the Sankhya system in the capital town of the Vedas. These causes are absolutely necessary for the successful

completion of any action, but don't you in any way connect them with the unchangeable Self (276-280). These five causes have become well-known in this world, as they have been proclaimed by the beating of a drum. It is, therefore, meet that they should fall on your ears as they will benefit you. As you have the philosopher's stone as myself, why should I put you to the trouble of finding someone else to talk about it? If a person has the mirror in front of him, why should he ask others to tell him how he looks? Wherever a devotee looks with a purpose in view, it becomes as he desires. So I have become a play-thing in your hands. When the Lord was saying this in the flush of affection, he lost consciousness. As for Arjuna, he became immersed in bliss (281-285). Even if there is a mountain of moon-stones, it oozes to form a lake in bright moonshine; in the same way Arjuna had become bliss incarnate by the removal of the screen between the bliss and realisation. But the Lord, being strong, regained his senses and lifted up Arjuna from the ocean of bliss. The ocean of bliss had such a high tidal flow that Arjuna, the great warrior, with his high talent, was about to be drowned in it. The Lord checked the flow and said, "O Partha, do not lose sight of yourself and come to your senses.

At this, Arjuna heaved a sigh and nodded his head (286-290). He said, "O Lord, although I am so close to you. yet I am separate from you. I get tired of this and wish to attain unison with you. Since you are so affectionately fulfilling my desires, then why do you place me in a predicament by reminding me of my separate state?" Then the Lord said, "O you silly fellow, you have not yet come to know properly what '. I have told you. Are the moon and its splendour ever separate from each other? I am afraid to tell you what is in my mind. If one, becomes displeased with one's beloved their bond of love becomes stronger – this is love. So long as this love between us remains intact, our separateness bound to remain. But let us not discuss it further (291-295). Arjuna, we were just now talking of actions being distinct from the Self'. On this Arjuna said,, "O Lord, you have read my mind correctly and broached the topic. You had promised to tell me the five causes responsible " ' for action. The relationship between the Self and action is my favourite topic; so please explain it me".

Hearing his words, Lord Krishna said with great pleasure, 'Where else can I find a hearer, who is so persistent in asking questions (296-300)? " I shall, therefore, tell you what I had intended, but this would mean that I shall place you under an additional debt of affection." Then Arjuna replied, 'O Lord, have you completely forgotten what you said before? You said that in order to preserve this affection you are maintaining the distinction between you and me." Then Lord Krishna said: Be it so, now hear attentively what I am going to say. O Arjuna, it is true that all actions originate from Five causes without the intervention of knowledge of the Self. These five causes combine to give shape to the action. The same

causes also provide the reasons for the action. (301-305) But there the Self remains neutral and is neither the material nor the instrumental cause of action and does not help in the successful implementation of action. Just as the sky is unattached to either night or day, so the good or bad deeds happen to the unattached Self. When water, heat and vapour combine. they produce the clouds; yet the sky knows nothing about it. The boat is fashioned out of wooden planks and the boatman steers it on the water, which is only a witness there. When a lump of clay is placed on the wheel and the wheel is turned round and round with a stick, it becomes a pot (306-310). Here it is the potter's skill which causes it, and the earth does nothing except giving support to the wheel. Just consider all this. All the activities of the world are carried on in the light of the sun, but is the sun concerned with any of them? So all these Five causes come together to grow the creeper in the form of actions; but the Self remains aloof from them. I shall now describe these Five causes, each one separately, in the same way as pearls should be picked up and weighed separately.

14. *The seat of action (body) as also the agent, various instruments (sense-organs and the mind), their manifold distinct functions and the fifth, their presiding deities.*

I say that the body is the first cause of action. (311-315) It is called a seat because the experiencer resides here along with the objects of experience. All the ten sense-organs toil day and night and by reason of the prakriti present pleasure and pain for the experience of the purusha; there is no other place except the body where he can experience them. Therefore, the body is called the seat of experience. This is the home of the twenty-four elements. and the tangle of bondage and release is unravelled here. The body gives support to the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, and so it has received the name of a body (316-320).

In the same way, the agent is the second cause of action. He is the reflection of the Self. When rain falls on the earth, it forms a puddle and when the sky is reflected in it, it assumes the form of the puddle. When the prince forgets himself in sleep and mistakenly dreams that he has become a pauper, so the Self forgets his essential nature and identifies himself with the body. The Self who has forgotten his own nature is well-known as Java, the embodied Self. The latter has entered into a compact that he will ever associate himself with the body in all matters (321-325). Through delusion, he thinks that he has performed the actions which in reality are carried out by the body. It is for this reason that the embodied Self is called the agent.

Now even though the sight is the same, it appears split like a fly-whisker on account of " the eye-lashes. The lamp inside the house is one, but it

appears more than one when seen through the interstices of a ' lattice. The same ' actor appears to be. different, when he acts the nine different sentiments. In the same way, though the intellect is one, yet it displays itself in different forms through the different senses (326-330). The different organs of the body, therefore, constitute the third cause of action. Water flows separately towards the East and the West. and even though it is one and the same. it appears as big or small rivers. In the same way the motive power of the wind is constant, but it appears different in different regions of the body. When it operates through the faculty of speech, we call it 'talking'. When it operates through the hands, we say that it functions as 'give and take'. When it operates through the feet, it is known as 'motion' and when it operates through the lower outlets, it throws out urine and excreta (331-335). When it operates between the regions of the navel to the heart and displays the word Om, it is known as prana. When it moves upwards, it takes the name of udana. When it goes, out. through the lower outlet (anus), it is known as apana and when it pervades the entire body, it is called vyana. When it distributes the juice of the digested food in all parts of the body and pervades all the joints of the body, it is known as samana (336-340). Yawning, sneezing, belching etc. which are minor functions of this wand, are known as naga, kurma, krukar etc. In this way, O great warrior, although the motive power of the wind is the same, it takes different names according to its functions. Know that this power of the wind which operates in different forms is the fourth cause of action.

Then imagine that we have the best season in autumn, the rising of the moon in the night of the full moon, or an excellent park in the spring, the company of the beloved and all the requisite things of enjoyment (341-345), or that there should be a lotus in full bloom filled with pollens or that there should be poetical power in one's speech, -with artistic charm added to it and that charm should be touched by the highest Truth, so there should be excellence, accompanied with all splendid mental states, The senses should have developed well as a result of that intelligence and the assemblage of deities which gives support to the senses should be favourable. This assemblage of favourable deities consisting of the sun etc. (346-350), is the fifth cause of- the action. The Lord added, "I have thus narrated to you the Five causes of action in such a way that you will be able to grasp them. Now I shall elucidate to you the Five reasons (instrumental causes) by which these causes expand and give rise to a chain of actions."

15. *Whatever action a man performs with his body, speech and mind, whether right or wrong, these are its (instrumental) causes.*

Now the sudden advent of spring is the cause of the fresh foliage of trees, which results in flowers and fruits. The monsoon brings clouds, the clouds bring rain and the rain produces an abundant crop of grain (351-355). The

East brings the dawn, the sun brings the light, and when the sun shines, there is the day-time. So, O Arjuna, the mind is the instrumental cause of decision of action. This decision Ands expression in speech, and then in the light of that speech, the way of action becomes clear and the agent undertakes that action. Thus, the body and other organs become the instrumental causes of such body and organs through actions. Just as an article of iron is hammered out by an iron-hammer, or cloth is fashioned by weaving yarn in warp and woof (356- 360), or a diamond is shaped by cutting it with a diamond, so the actions of mind, speech and body become the instrumental causes of mind, speech and body.

Now if the body etc. are the material causes of action, a doubt may arise how they can also become the instrumental causes of the body etc. Just as the sun is the cause, both material and instrumental, of light, or the joints of sugarcane promote the growth of the sugar-cane, or the faculty of the speech has to be employed to sing the praise of the goddess of speech, or the Vedas have to express the majesty of the Vedas, so everyone knows that the body, speech and mind become the cause of action; but there is no doubt that the same actions become the instrumental cause of the body, speech and mind (361-365). In this way, if the five causes of body etc. are supported by the external causes, then they both together produce actions.

If actions are performed according to scriptural injunctions, they become righteous actions and promote righteous conduct. The rain fallen in the paddy field gets absorbed there and helps the growth of paddy.. If a person leaves his home in anger and takes the road to Dwaraka, he may feel fatigued by walking, but the steps he has taken do not become fruitless. Thus whatever action is undertaken through the combination of both causes is simply blind action. But it becomes righteous if it is performed diligently according to the injunctions of the scriptures (366-370). If milk, while being poured into a glass spills outside, it is spent, but one cannot say that 1t is properly spent. If action performed contrary to the scriptures does not bear fruit, why should we not regard stolen riches as given in charity? O Arjuna, is there any incantation which does not contain the letters of the alphabet? And is there anyone who does not utter these letters? But as long as one does not understand the secret of incantation, he will not secure its fruit by uttering all the fifty-two letters of the alphabet. In that way if an action is performed through. the combination of causes wantonly but not as prescribed by the scriptures, then it is as good as not done (371-375). Such an action is unrighteous and becomes an immoral action.

16. *That being so, he who sees the absolute Self as the agent through the lack of knowledge - such a perverse person sees not (truly).*

In this way, O celebrated Arjuna. there are five instrumental causes for the action resulting from Five causes. When the Self becomes associated with them, he becomes involved in that action. Just as the sun without taking any form reveals the forms, so the Self also reveals the action without taking its form. O great warrior, just as without becoming either the mirror or the reflection, one sees both by looking into the mirror, or the sun makes day and night without being either, so the Self reveals action without being its agent (376-380). But when a person who is deluded by the egoistic feeling identifies himself with the body and becomes attached to it, he remains in total darkness as of midnight in regard to the Self. He who does not recognise that Self, God and the Supreme Self exist beyond the body is firmly convinced that the Self is the doer of action; nay, he thinks that he as body is the agent of actions. He has never even heard that he is the Self who is beyond the actions and only their witness. What is strange, therefore, is that he regards the limitless Self as limited by his body. Does not the owl close his eyes during the day and make it night (381-385)? If a person has not seen the real sun, will-he not consider its reflection in water as the - sun? He then believes that the sun exists when there is water in the puddle the sun ceases to exist when the puddle is dried up and that the sun has tremor when the water in the puddle, is stirred by the wind. So long as the person who is asleep does not wake up, he is bound to feel as real what he sees in his dream. Is there any wonder that a person who has no knowledge of a rope mistakes it for a serpent and becomes frightened? The moon will appear yellow to a jaundiced eye, and who else but a deer is deceived by the mirage? He who keeps away from the scriptures and the Guru (literally, does not allow even the breeze of the mention of their name to touch his body), he lives in a fool's paradise (386-390). Just as the jackals impute the motion of the clouds to the moon and charge the moon with the motion, a person keeps the Self confined in the net of the body in the mistaken belief that the body is the Self. Under this false impression, he shuts himself up in the prison of the body with the strong bonds of actions. When a parrot sitting on a tube holds it fast under the mistaken impression that he is tied to it, so he who ascribes the actions of the prakriti to the pure Self, goes on counting his actions through many epochs.

Now I shall tell you how one can recognise a person who remains untainted by actions even while performing them, like the sub-marine Are which remains untouched by the sea even while dwelling in it (391-395). If we continue to meditate over an emancipated person, we attain liberation. Just as one sees a missing thing in the lamp-light, or one sees one's reflection in a clean mirror or the salt is dissolved when put in water, or why say more, as a reflection turns back to see the reflecting body merged in that body, in the same way by thinking of saints, one discovers one's Self. One should, therefore, describe and hear the merits of saints (396-400). The faculty of vision is not obstructed by the outer skin; in the same

way. even when one is immersed in activity, one does not become tainted by its good or bad fruits. I shall now tell you by giving you good reasons the signs of a person who has gone beyond actions.

17. *He who has no egoistic feeling, whose understanding is not polluted, even if he were to slay these people, he slays not, nor is he bound (by his action).*

O wise Arjuna, he who was experiencing for long the worldly happenings in a dream of ignorance heard the great proposition (mahavakya) "tat tvam asi, you ore that." He was awakened from his dream of the world and deep slumber of ignorance into a blissful state by the grace of the Guru, who woke him up by placing his hand over his head and patting it (401-405). Just as with the moonbeams the mirage disappears or With the departure of childhood the goblin does not remain an object of fear, or when the firewood is burnt it cannot be used as firewood, or a dream disappears as soon as one wakes up, so his mind does not entertain the notions of 'I' and 'Mine'. If the sun enters a cave in search of darkness, he can never see it there, so he who has realised the Self sees no distinction between the object seen and the seer (406-410). Just as a thing which catches fire becomes fire, obliterating any distinction between one who burns and one who is burnt, so when the notion of the action as separate from the Self and of the attribution of its agency to the Self disappears, then what remains is the pristine state of the Self. Will the Lord of this state ever think that he is the body? Will the flood of deluge identify itself with a brook? In the same way, how can one who has realised the Self identify himself with the body? Can the disc of the sun contain its light? Can the butter churned out of curds and separated from it -again merge into the butter-milk (411-415)? Can the latent Are once released from the fire-wood re-enter it and remain latent in it again? How can the sun who has come out of the womb of night ever cognize the night? In the same way, how can a person, in whom the knowable object and the knower have become one, entertain the egoistic feeling that he is the body? As the sky pervades wherever one goes, the Self also pervades all. So whatever work one does is his own Self. In what way then can he think himself to be the agent of any action (416-420)?

Just as there is no space apart from the sky, or the sea has no flow apart from it or the Pole star has no moon, similar is the state of the person (who has realised the Self). In the same way, a person, who has got rid of his egoistic feeling that he is the doer continues to work so long as he is in the body. Even though the wind has ceased to flow, the (foliage of) tree continues to flutter for some time. Even though the camphor has completely evaporated, its fragrance remains in its casket for some time. Even though the musical concert has come to an end, the thrill it has caused in the hearers does not abate all at once. The land retains

moisture for some time even after the water has flowed away. Even after the sun has set. its light remains - for- some time in the form of twilight (421-425). The arrow moves forward with its momentum even after hitting the target. Even though the potter has removed the pot from the wheel, the wheel keeps on rotating until its speed is spent up. In the same way, even after the egoistic feeling has disappeared, the prakriti which has created the body makes it perform actions. Just as a dream appears in sleep without any prior thought, or trees grow in forest even without being planted or imaginary cities are formed in the sky without any construction, so without the Self doing anything, actions continue to be performed because of the five causes consisting of the body etc. (426-430).

These Five causes, both material and instrumental, combine together to cause the actions to be performed by reason of the latent impressions of the past actions in previous births. These actions may lead to the destruction of the world or give rise to new worlds. Just as the sun is not aware. that because of him the night-lily withers and the day-lily blooms when it rises, or the sky does not know that the earth is blown to pieces by lightning or that it has grown green because of the showers of rain, so he remains in the body without body-consciousness (431-435). Just as a person who has woken up from sleep does not see dreams, so he is not aware of the worldly events which take place because of his body etc. But those who view him merely through their physical eyes regard him as the doer of these actions. Does not the jackal think that the scarecrow of grass erected on the border of the farm is the watchman of the farm? Only others know whether a lunatic wanders about dressed or in a naked condition. Other persons may count the wounds sustained by a warrior who has died on the battle-field. The whole world sees with reverence the self-immolation of a sati (on the pyre of her deceased husband}; while she herself is unconscious of the Are, her own person and the spectators (436-440). In the same way, he who is awakened to his real Self, and whose notion of being a seer has vanished along with the object to be seen, does not know what his senses are doing. If persons standing on the shore of the sea see a big wave swallowing a small one, yet from the standpoint of water, who has swallowed what? In the same way, a person who has attained perfection does not see anyone distinct from him, whom he can kill. Even if a devotee sees the gold idol of the goddess Durga killing the gold idol of a buffalo-demon with a three-pointed gold spear, in reality the idols and the spear are only pure gold (441-445). Again in a painting, the Are and water appear as if they are real, but there is neither real fire nor moisture. In the same way in the case of a person who is liberated while alive, the movements of his body take place according to the latent impression of his past life. But not knowing this; ignorant persons call him the doer. But then if his natural actions lead to the destruction of the world, one should never say that he has caused it. Can the sun say that it will dispel the darkness after seeing it? So in the case of

an enlightened person who has no sense of duality, there remains nothing different from him which he can destroy.

Just as a stream which joins the river Ganga does not remain impure, so his inflect is not polluted by merit and demerit (446-450). If Are, O Arjuna, catches fire, will it get burnt or will a weapon pierce itself? So he who does not consider his action different from himself, how can he be polluted by it? Since he has become action, agent and the instrument, all these three himself, he is not bound by the actions performed by his body etc. Because it is only the embodied Self, who imagining himself to be the agent, works skilfully in the mine of the body etc. with the implements of the ten senses. He raises in a moment mansions of works after fixing the boundaries of justice and injustice (451-455). But the Self plays no role in this great work. And if you say that he starts the work, that too is not the case. The Self is a mere witness and his essential nature is knowledge itself. So how do you think that he gives his approval to the desire for activity? The activity which holds the people in its grip does not affect the Self. Therefore, he who had become one with the Self does not become a prisoner of actions. But the picture of false knowledge is painted on the canvas of ignorance as a result of the famous three-fold cause (456-460). For this triad of knower, knowledge and the object of knowledge is the seed of, and without doubt, the impulse to action. O winner of wealth, I shall now explain to you in clear terms the different forms of this triad.

18. *The impulse to action is threefold – knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower, while the totality of action consists of the senses, the action and the agent.*

As the sun sends out its rays and causes the lilies to bloom, so the embodied Self sends out its organs of knowledge to enjoy the sense-objects. Or as a king rides out on a horse without a saddle and brings in the loot by attacking other countries with weapons, so the endowed Self enjoys the sensuous pleasure and pain brought in by the senses. In short, he whose cognisance makes the embodied Self experience pleasure and pain through the senses and vanishes in deep sleep (461-465) is called the knower, while that which is said to be experienced is knowledge. O Arjuna, this knowledge, which is born of ignorance, divides itself into three kinds. The knowledge plants in its run-way a hurdle in the form of the knowable object and keeps the knower behind itself. Thus building a bridge of communication between the knower and the object of knowledge, it makes them carry on their activities. The knowledge comes to a halt as soon as it reaches the limit of the knowable object and gives different names to the different objects (466-470). This knowledge is undoubtedly the empirical knowledge. Now I shall tell you the characteristics of the knowable object. The knowable object becomes known in the five forms of sound, touch, form, taste and smell. Just as one

mango is known to the senses by its taste, colour, smell and touch, so the knowable object, though one, is known to the senses in five forms. Just as the flow of a river stops when it meets the sea, or walking stops when the destination is reached, or the growth of a crop stops when it bears fruit (471-475), so, O Arjuna, where the knowledge running through the channels of senses stops, that, O Arjuna, is the object of knowledge.

Thus I have told you the characteristics of the knower, the knowledge and the object of knowledge. These become the cause of three-fold action. Even though the object of knowledge such as sound is of Five kinds, it is either agreeable or disagreeable. O winner of wealth, if the knower acquires even a little knowledge of the knowable object, the knower becomes inclined either to accept it or reject it. A heron watches to catch the fish after seeing it, or a poor man wishes to secure the treasure as soon as he sees it or a passionate person desires to win a woman whom he sees (476-480). Similarly water flows - to the low lying lands, or the bee is attracted to the flower by its fragrance or the calf runs to its mother as the time of milking approaches. After hearing the description of the nymph Urvashi, people put up ladders in the form of sacrifices to the heavens. O Arjuna, a blue pigeon soaring in the sky swoops down at the very sight of a she-pigeon or the peacock whirls in the sky on hearing peels of thunder. In the same way, the knower rushes to the objects of knowledge. Therefore, O Arjuna, all actions commence from knowledge, the knowable object and the knower (481-485). If this object of knowledge is by chance agreeable to the doer, he cannot brook even a moment's delay in its enjoyment. If, on the other hand, the same object is not to his liking, each moment of delay in abandoning it seems to him as long as an epoch. The same object creates joy or fear in one's heart according as it appears to him as a neckless or a serpent. Similar is the state of the knower when he sees an agreeable or disagreeable object and he starts action to secure it or to abandon it. A warrior, at the sight of an adversary worthy of him, becomes full of ardour and dismounts from the chariot to meet him in combat (486-490). In the same way the knower becomes the agent. Just as one used to eat a ready meal should have to start to cook, or the bee should have to begin to make a garden, or the touchstone should itself become the tester or the deity itself should have to build its own temple. so the knower, longing for the sense-object, makes his senses toil hard to get it and becomes the doer.

When the knower becomes the doer; then the knowledge becomes his instrument of action and the object of knowledge becomes naturally the action itself. O wise Arjuna, thus a change takes place in the original nature of the knower. Just as the sight becomes dim at night (491-495) or the luxuries of the rich diminish with bad luck or the moon goes on waning after the night of full moon, so when his senses become active he becomes wrapped up in the pride of a doer. I shall tell you now his

characteristics. please listen. Intellect, the mind, the seat of memory and egoism are the four states of the internal organ, and skin, ears, eyes, the tongue and the nose are the Five external organs. With the aid of the internal organs, the agent makes an appraisal of what work he should undertake. If he thinks that a particular action will bring him happiness (496-500), then he makes all the ten sense-organs work hard until the action bears fruit. Or if on the other hand, he anticipates trouble from such action, he persuades his sense-organs to forsake it. Just as a king makes his servants toil hard to collect his dues, so he makes the sense-organs labour hard until the cause of misery is removed. Thus when the knower harnesses the sense-organs to perform or avoid some action, he is known as the agent. (501-505) Since this agent employs the sense-organs like the plough, give call them the instruments of action. When the agent undertakes some activity by making use of these instruments, that which is pervaded by this activity is the action. Just as the mind of,' the goldsmith is pervaded by the ornaments, or the moon-light is pervaded by the moonbeams, or the creeper is pervaded by its growth, or the sunlight is pervaded by its splendour, or the sugar-cane juice is pervaded by sweetness, or the sky is pervaded by space, so that which is pervaded by the activity of the agent is the action. There is no doubt about this. (506-510). Thus I have explained to you the characteristics of action, agent and the instrument. Here the knower, the knowledge and the object of knowledge constitute the threefold impulse to action; similarly the agent the instruments and the action are the three constituents of action. Just as smoke is latent in fire. the tree in seed, or passion in the mind, or gold in the gold mine, so the triad of doer, the deed and the instruments form the very essence of action. Therefore, when there arises the egoistic notion, 'this is the action, and I am its agent,' then the Self stands aloof from all such actions (511-515). Therefore, O talented Arjuna, do I need to tell you more that the Self is distinct from actions? You know it already.

19. *Knowledge, action and agent are threefold based on the distinction of quality. Hear also about these as stated in the doctrine of the gunas.*

Now knowledge, action and agent, which I told you about, are of three kinds depending upon the three qualities. Do not place your faith in them, O Arjuna, because two of these qualities lead to bondage, while only the quality of sattva is conducive to liberation. As regards the quality of sattva which is described in detail in the Sankhya texts, I shall explain to you its distinctive features so that you will easily understand it. This Sankhya philosophy is the sea of right thoughts, the moon which makes the lotus plant in the form of Self-knowledge bloom, and the best among the metaphysical sciences in the view of those who have the vision of knowledge (516-520). It is verily the sun who distinguishes between the prakriti and: purusha; which are mixed like day - and night. In this science is measured the infinite mass of ignorance in terms of twenty-four

principles which conduces to the uninterrupted enjoyment of higher Self. The characteristics of the different gunas extolled this Sankhya system, are as follows: These three gunas have, with their strength, brought all perceptible things under their sway and stamped them in three ways. These gunas, namely sattva. rajas and tamas are so grand that they have distinguished all beings from god Brahma to insects into three types (521-525). But I shall first explain to you how this entire universe has fallen into the clutches of these three gunas; for if the vision is clear, everything can be seen with clarity. So with the attainment of pure knowledge, it becomes easy to comprehend the essential nature of things. I shall, therefore. describe the sattvic knowledge, please give your attention, so said Lord Krishna, who is essentially of the nature of liberation.

20. *That by which one perceives in all beings a single immutable substance, indivisible though seemingly divided, know that knowledge arises from sattva.*

    O Arjuna, that is pure sattvic knowledge in which the knowable object I dissolved along with the knower. Just as the sun does not see darkness or the sea does not know the river or one cannot grasp ones shadow with one's hand (526-530), so this knowledge does not discern any distinction among beings from Lord Shiva to a blade of grass. Just as a picture on the wall is lost when it is smeared with cow-dung, or salt is dissolved when washed in water or the dream disappears after waking up, so when the knowable is seen in the light of knowledge, the distinction between the knower, the knowledge and the knowable vanishes. One does not test the gold in ornaments by melting them nor does anyone strain the waves to obtain water. In the same way, know that knowledge to be sattvic which does not concern itself with the world of appearance (531-535). Just as one sees one's reflection in the mirror, so one who has attained the sattvic knowledge perceives the knowable in the form of one's knowledge. This sattvic knowledge is verily the temple of the goddess Lakshmi in the form of liberation. Now I shall explain to you the characteristics of rajasic knowledge.

21. *But that knowledge by which one knows several manifold existences in all creatures as separate, know that the knowledge arises from rajas.*

    O Arjuna, listen carefully. That knowledge is rajasic, which sees distinctions in all beings. That knowledge has fragmented itself by the conception of diversity among beings and has bewildered the knower. Just as sleep places the veil of oblivion over the real state of things and makes one suffer troubles in a dream (536-540), so this knowledge spreads out Maya round the yard of Self- knowledge and makes the embodied Self go through the three states of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep. A child does not know the gold hidden in the ornaments, so this knowledge does

not perceive unity behind the names and forms. An ignorant person cannot recognise the earth of which earthen pitchers or pots are made or know Are by seeing it in a lamp, state or yarn in the cloth shown to him or the canvas when he is shown a picture (painted on it), so his knowledge sees diversity in all beings, obscuring his notion of unity (541-545). Just as the fire appears, distinct because of the diversity of fire-wood, or as the fragrance smells different on account of the diversity of flowers or as the moon appears as divided because of its reflections in moving waters, so the knowledge which sees distinctions as big or small in diverse things is rajasic knowledge. If one wishes to avoid the house of a barbarian, one must know where it is So I shall now explain to you the Characteristics of tamasic knowledge, so that you will be able to avoid 1t.

22. *That which is confined to one object, as though it were all and is causeless and trifling and lacking in truth and meaning, that (knowledge) is said to arise from tamas.*

That knowledge is tamasic which stripped of all clothes in the form of ordinances, roams about naked, and on which the Vedas have turned their back. Other shastras too, which follow the path of the Vedas. have banished it to the mountain in the form of non-Aryan religion after condemning it (546-550). O Arjuna, as that knowledge is seized by the demoness of tamas, it roams about like a mad person. That knowledge does not shrink from any kind of physical contact and does not consider any object as prohibited like a stray dog left in a deserted place which consumes everything. leaving only a thing which cannot be held in its mouth or which would burn its mouth. Just as a mouse does not know whether the gold stolen by it is pure or alloyed, or a meat-eater does not care whether the meat is red or white, or a forest conflagration does not discriminate between good or bad trees, or the housefly does not bother whether the body on which it lands is dead or alive (551-555), or the crow does not stop to think whether the food before it is served or vomited, or whether it is fresh or rotten. so this knowledge, infatuated with sensual pleasures, does not know how to perform actions which are prescribed and avoid actions which are prohibited. Whatever sense-object it sees, it takes it up for enjoyment and if it happens to be a woman or riches, it presents that object to the generative organ or the stomach. When it sees water, it does not stop to think whether it is pure or impure, but only sees whether it will quench his thirst and give it pleasure. It thinks that whatever is to its liking is pure, without any consideration as to whether it is edible or inedible, or whether it is reporchable or irreproachable (556-560). That knowledge understands that the woman is only a fit object of enjoyment for the sense of touch and it is ever yearning to form an intimacy with her. It recognises only those as relatives who serve its self-interest and not those who are the blood-relations. Just as death considers every living creature as its fare or the fire thinks everything as its fuel, so the tamasic

knowledge thinks that the whole world is there for its benefit. So that knowledge regards the whole world as its object of enjoyment and thinks that the sole fruit of action is to feed the belly. Just as all the rain which drops from the sky goes to join the sea, so it regards that all activity is to All the belly (i.e. to support life) (561-565). This knowledge knows not about heaven and hell nor about activity and renunciation and is ignorant about what action it should undertake or avoid. This knowledge does not extend beyond the consideration that the Self is only the body and the God is the stone idol. According to this knowledge, the soul dies along with its actions at the fall of the body and there remains nothing to enjoy the fruit of the actions. Further if God exists as a witness to one's actions and dispenses their fruits in the form of pleasure and pain, then one should sell the God's image and use the proceeds for one's maintenance. If it is said that the village deities will punish us for our actions, then why are the mountains, from whose rocks they are made, left alone (566-570)?

If it admits the existence of God, it regards the stone idol as God and the body as the Self. According to that knowledge, all ideas about merit and demerit are false and one's good lies in indulging in sensuous pleasures and consuming all things like fire. It is convinced that whatever is perceptible to the physical eye or whatever is pleasing to the senses is alone real. In short, O. Partha, just as the masses of smoke go up in the sky, his thoughts, which grow on these lines, are of no avail. So this tamasic knowledge is worthless and infructuous like a flimsy tree which, whether dry or fresh, grows and breaks, (571-575) or like the ear of corn of a sugarcane, or like an impotent person, or the grove of silk-cotton trees, or the mind of an infant or like the stolen money or the neck-nipple of a she goat. Knowledge which is hollow and lack-lustre they call tamasic knowledge.

Now it is called knowledge for this reason: We say that one has broad eyes if one is born blind or that one has fine ears if one is deaf or that wine is a drink. In that way the term knowledge applied to tamasic knowledge is a misnomer (576-580). In short, we should not call it knowledge, but darkness (tamas). O best among the hearers, I have thus explained to you the three kinds of knowledge based on the gunas along with their characteristics. O archer, all actions are performed by the agent in the light of these three kinds of knowledge. Like water flowing in currents, the action is also distributed in three parts, and a single action becomes threefold because of the threefold knowledge, I shall tell you first the characteristics of sattvic action (581-585).

23. *If a prescribed duty is done without attachment, and without passion and hate, by one who does not seek its fruit is said to be of sattva quality.*

Sattvic action devolves upon the doer according to his qualification, in the way a chaste wife hugs her husband of her own accord. This obligatory action, which is performed always, becomes an ornament to the doer, as sandal- paste does to a woman of light complexion or collyrium does to the eyes of a young woman. If it is combined with occasional duties, it is like adding fragrance to the ornament. Like a mother who never gets tired of bringing up her child at the cost of wealth, physical comfort and life, one performs actions, with heart and soul, without the desire for their fruit and dedicates them to the Supreme Brahman (586-590). The house-wife, while serving food to a dear one, never feels bothered that it might get exhausted; in the same way he does not feel bitterness or anger if a good work is left undone or partly done or does not become elated if it is completed according to plan. The action performed skillfully like this is said to be sattvic because of its predominant sattva quality. I shall tell you now the true nature of rajasic action. Take care that your attention does not flag.

24. *But action, which is done with much effort by one who desires some gain from it or by one who is moved by egoism, that action is said to be of rajas quality.*

He (a rajasic doer) is like a fool who never talks sweetly to his parents but is courteous to others (591-595). He is like one, who does not sprinkle water on the basil (Tulsi) plant but pours milk over the grape vine. He does not even get up from his seat to perform the obligatory actions, but if he undertakes work with a selfish motive, he does not feel any strain even if he has to labour hard. He is not satisfied even if he sows large quantities of seed in the field or if he invests large amounts in the business of money-lending. Just as one who has acquired a philosopher's stone spends all his riches in the purchase of iron and becomes prosperous (596-600), so this, rajasic doer, with an eye on their fruit, performs laborious works, but does not feel that he has undertaken enough work. He performs well, in anticipation of their fruits, a number of actions with a selfish motive and as laid down by the scriptures, but he blows his trumpet of having done so and gives gifts to earn the reputation of being a pious person. Puffed up by the works undertaken by him he does not show proper respect to his parents or his preceptor, just as typhus fever is defiant of medicine. Then whatever actions he undertakes with an egoistic feeling and with the desire for their fruit, he exerts himself to perform them, like an acrobat who performs feats to earn his livelihood. A rat scoops up a mountain to gain one grain, a frog stirs up the sea for moss or the snake-charmer carries the burden of snakes though he gets nothing more than paltry alms. What a pity that such persons find pleasure in exertions of this kind! Like the white ant which digs the ground up to the nether world for the sake of a grain of corn, they labour hard to gain the celestial

pleasures. Such laborious action which is reward-oriented is rajasic action. Now hear the characteristics of tamasic action.

25. *And action undertaken from delusion without regard to one's capacity or consequences (such as) death or injury is said to be of tamas quality.*

That is tamasic action, which is the sink of slander and because of which the prohibitions have fulfilled their life's purpose. The result of such action does not become perceptible like the line drawn on the water. Such action is of no avail like the churning of butter-milk, the blowing of ashes, or the grinding of the sand in an oil-mill or winnowing the chaff or piercing the space, or placing a net to catch the wind (611-615). Otherwise such actions which are performed by wearing out the valuable human body and by spending money devastates the world. Just as when the lotuses are dragged with a thorny noose, the noose becomes worn out, but the lotuses also get torn, or just as the moth attacks the lamp with hatred and with the loss of its life extinguishes the lamp and keeps the house in darkness, in the same way the tamasic karma not only proves injurious to the doer and his body, but also causes harm to others. The fly enters the belly of a person and dies, but it causes him agony by making him vomit: the tamasic action reminds one of this actions of the fly (616-620). Such a person undertakes an action without thinking whether he has the capability to perform it. He sets out to perform the action thoughtlessly through egotism without any thought about his resources, the occasion and his gain from such action. Fire burns its own dwelling-place (i.e. wooden sticks from which the Are is produced by friction) and spreads out and the sea swells transgressing its limits. (621-625) Then they surge forward, without looking backward or forward and treating big and small and highways and byways alike. Know, O Arjuna, that the tamasic action is that which does not distinguish between what is proper and improper, and between what is one's own and what 1s another's. So I have explained to you with reason how action has become threefold on account of the three gunas. Just as the same person becomes fourfold because of stages of life *(ashramas)* so the agent also, who has the egoistic feeling of being the doer, also becomes threefold on account of the three distinct kinds of action. I shall now describe the sattvic agent, listen attentively (626-630).

26. *An agent free from attachment and egoism, possessing firmness and zeal, and unmoved by success or failure is said to be endowed with sattva.*

As the branches of the sandal tree relinquishing desire grow straight, or the betel plant though without fruit is fruitful because of its leaves, so he performs the obligatory (nitya) and occasional (naimittica) actions. But these should not be regarded as futile. These actions never become in vain. Oh Arjuna, haw can a fruit bear another fruit? He performs many

such actions sincerely, but as the cloud in the rainy season gives rain without a thunder, he feels no conceit as their agent. After resolving to perform actions to be dedicated to God (631-635), he chooses the proper time and place for their performance and in doubtful cases he decides the matter by reference to the scriptures. By bringing harmony into the senses and his natural inclinations, he binds his feet with fetters of self-restraint and does not allow his mind to turn to the fruit of action. As long as he lives, he takes care to keep up fortitude of the best kind in order to achieve self-restraint. He does not care for his physical comforts while working, out of love for the attainment of self-realisation. While doing such works he forgoes sleep, does not feel the pangs of hunger and is not touched by sensuous pleasures (636-640). As gold burnt in fire suffers loss of weight but improves in purity. He feels even more enthusiastic about performing actions. If a person has disinterested love for something, he cares a two pence for his life for its sake. When the faithful wife leaps into the funeral pyre of her husband, she is covered with horripilation all over her body. Therefore, O Arjuna, if someone is enamoured of his Self, will he mind if his body suffers from love's labour? As desire for sensuous pleasures diminishes and he loses consciousness of his body, his joy in performing actions is redoubled. In this way, if some action started by him comes to a stop by mischance (641-645), like a cart dashing down a cliff, he does not feel uneasy about it. On the other hand, if the work begun by him reaches its consummation, he does not parade his success. O Arjuna, only a person who displays these characteristics while performing actions should be called a sattvika agent. O winner of wealth, now a sure sign of a rajasa agent is that all worldly desires dwell in him.

27. *An agent, full of passion and desirous of the fruit of actions, greedy, destructive and unclean and subject to Joy and gloom, is said to be endowed with rajas quality.*

Just as a dung-hill is a place where all the village rubbish accumulates or the funeral ground is the place wherein all inauspicious things gather. (646-650) so the rajasic agent is the place where all desires and sins in the world wash their feet. Such a person undertakes only such works as yield the desired fruit. He is loth to spend even a cowrie out of his earnings, to preserve which he is even prepared to risk his life. As a heron lies in wait to catch the fish, he is diligent in preserving his hoard, but is ever ready to pocket the property of others. If a person goes near a jujube tree, he is caught by its thorns, his body gets scratched if he tries to disentangle himself and his tongue smarts if he eats its fruit. (651-655) Likewise he gives pain to others with his body, speech and mind, is indifferent to doing good to others and secures his own self-interest. He is not capable of completing the work undertaken, but he does not take dislike to action in any form. He is devoid of purity internally and externally like the thorn-apple which has intoxicating pulp inside and thorns outside.

If he comes into possession of the fruit of his action, he becomes overjoyed and mocks the world. On the other hand, if the work undertaken does not hear fruit, he grieves and rejects it disdainfully (656-660). Know for certain that whoever performs actions in this manner is a rajasa agent. Now I shall tell you clearly the nature of the tamasic agent, who is a mine of bad deeds.

28. *An agent who is undisciplined, vulgar and stubborn, deceitful, dishonest and indolent, morose and procrastinating, is said to be endowed with tamas quality.*

The fire does not know how things coming into contact with it burn, or a weapon does not realise how its sharp edge takes the life of another or the poison is not aware how fatal it is to others. Likewise a tamasic agent readily undertakes wicked deeds which tend to harm himself and others (661-665). He is not conscious about the kind of actions he is performing like a whirlwind blowing helter-skelter. So also, O Arjuna, his actions do not harmonise with his motives; and so the tamasic agent is not outmatched by a person of unsound mind. He lives in the enjoyment of sensuous pleasures like the ticks which suck the blood from the scrotum of a bull. As the child does not require any occasion to laugh or cry, so he is wayward in his behaviour. Since he is completely under the sway of prakriti, he becomes contented and puffed up with his wicked deeds like a dung-hill which swells with rubbish (666-670). He does not bow down his head even before God and he looks askance at a hill due to pride. His mind is always deceitful and his behaviour furtive, while his look is like that of a harlot, whose sole aim is to rob a person of all his wealth. His body, in fact, is full of deceit and his entire life is like a gambling den. Know that his appearance is like the habitation of a criminal tribesman, and so one should not cross his path. He becomes indignant, when he sees that somebody is doing better. Just as salt when mixed with milk makes it unfit for drinking (671-675), or a cold thing put in Are catches Are and suddenly blazes forth, or a good dish after entering the colon turns into filth, so if the good deeds of others pass through his hands, they become just the opposite. He regards the virtues of others as vices, and just as milk served to a snake becomes poison, even nectar in his hand becomes deadly poison. When, however, a virtuous act, which would make his life here worthwhile and also lead him to heaven comes his way (676-680), at that time he is definitely overtaken by sleep. But the same sleep leaves him as if to avoid pollution, when the time comes to perform an evil deed. As the crow has a mouth disease in the season of grapes or mangoes, or the owl suffers from blindness during daytime, so sloth overtakes him on holy days, but leaves him, as if in obedience to his order, when he is about to do some wicked deed. As the sub-marine Are remains burning in the belly of the sea, grief overtakes him (when fortune smiles on somebody). Just as fire made out of cow-dung gives out smoke or the anus ever throws out

foul-smelling wind, he suffers from gloom throughout his life (681-685). O Arjuna. he starts transactions in the hope of a gain beyond the present epoch and suffers from anxiety unknown to this world. But with all this effort not even a blade of grass comes into his hand. In this way, he who is a mass of sins in flesh and blood, is definitely a- tamasic agent. Thus, O Arjuna, I have explained to you the threefold characteristics of action, agent and knowledge.

29. *Now listen to the division of intellect and firmness, threefold according to the qualities, to be described fully and severally, O winner of wealth (Arjuna).*

Now the intellect, which dwells in the hamlet of ignorance (i.e. the body), wears the new apparel in the form of infatuation and is decorated with the ornament in the form of doubt (686-690). That intellect, which is the mirror for revealing the true nature of the individual Self, is of three kinds. Is there anything in this world which is not made threefold by the three qualities? Where can we find the firewood which does not contain fire in it? So also where is the thing which is not threefold in this visible world? And so this intellect, as also firmness, has become threefold as a result of these three qualities. I shall tell you now their distinct forms with their characteristics in detail (691-695). But of these two, I shall first relate to you the three kinds of intellect along with their qualities. There are three ways, namely the best, the middling and the worst, by which man comes into this world. These three well-known ways are performance of prescribed actions, motivated actions, and prohibited actions, because of which all living beings are subject to the fearful mundane existence.

30. *That which knows when to act and when to desist, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done the cause at fear and fearlessness, that intellect, O Partha, arises from sattvic quality.*

The obligatory actions which you are qualified to do and which are enjoined upon you by the scripture, are the best. One should perform these actions with an eye on their fruit, namely attainment of the Self, just as a thirsty person drinks water (696-700). Their performance frees one from the danger of rebirth and facilitates the attainment of liberation. The wise person who performs such actions becomes free from the fear of worldly existence and takes to the path of liberation. That intellect which has faith in the obligatory actions and resolves to perform them is sure to attain liberation. So why not leap into action by raising renunciation on the foundation of activity? A person afflicted by thirst drinks water; one who has fallen into the flood saves his life by swimming; and one who has fallen in a dark well comes out with the aid of sunlight (701-705). An ailing person who takes medicine and proper diet lives and if the fish gets the support of water, it does not have to fear for its life. So if a person

performs the obligatory actions, he is sure to attain liberation. This intellect of sattvic quality is inclined to the performance of obligatory actions and knows also the actions which are not At to be performed. As regards those actions which are performed with a motive or which are tainted because of their being prohibited, the intellect does not turn to them, as they are not At to be performed and are fraught with the fear of rebirth and death (706-710). O Arjuna, one does not enter into fire, or leap into deep water or seize a red hot impaling stake in his hand or touch with one's hand a hissing cobra or go into a tiger's den. The intellect feels. mightily afraid after seeing such actions prohibited by the scriptures. One cannot escape death when served with poisoned food. In the same way, one cannot avoid the cycle of birth and death if one performs prohibited actions. When the intellect comes to realise that such actions lead to bondage, it turns away from them (711-715). Just as a jeweller can determine by a suitable test genuine and counterfeit gems, so the intellect also makes a scrutiny of desirable and undesirable actions and then decides upon undertaking them or abstaining from them respectively. That which knows clearly what is good or evil action, is known as the sattvic intellect.

31. *That by which one knows wrongly that is right and what is wrong, what is one's duty and what is not, that intellect, O Partha, arises from rajas quality.*

    Just as in the village of herons they drink milk mixed with water, or a blind person cannot distinguish between day and night, or the bee which relishes honey in flowers is ready to scoop the wood without losing its status as a bee, so this rajasic intellect performs actions without distinguishing between merit and demerit (716-720). If a person buys pearls without proper inspection, he can hardly secure the best ones; he will definitely get the bad ones. So if a prohibited action does not fall to his lot through a happy chance, it is left out; otherwise his intellect treats both kinds of actions as equal. Just as one invites the whole society to a ceremonial feast (without considering whether they are worthy of it or not), that intellect which does not know how to choose between pure and impure actions is rajasic intellect.

32. *That which, obscured by darkness, mistakes the wrong to be right, and all matters in a perverted manner, that intellect, O Partha, arises from tamas quality.*

    Just as a thief considers a highway as a byway, or the demon's day begins with night-fall, or an unlucky person foregoes treasure found by him as a heap of charcoal, so this intellect considers all religious acts as sins and what is true as false. (721-725) It construes all rules of shastras wrongly and considers all good qualities as defects. In short, whatever has the sanction of the Vedas is considered perverse by this intellect. Such

intellect should be known as tamasic intellect, without reference to anyone. How can a dark night be considered suitable for giving of alms? O you, who are like the full moon which opens up the lotus in the form of Self-knowledge, I have made clear to you the three types of' intellect (726-730). Now when this intellect decides to undertake any action, the steadiness which sustains it is also of three kinds. I shall now explain to you, with their respective characteristics, the three types of steadiness; please give your attention.

33. *That firmness, by which one upholds the activities of the mind, breath and senses by means of unfailing yoga, that steadiness, O Partha, arises from sattva quality.*

When the sun rises, all darkness vanishes and all thefts cease, and when the King so orders all underhand dealings come to a stop. When a strong wind blows, all the clouds are swept out with their thunder or when the sage Agastya (Sirius) appears, the sea becomes calm. When the moon rises all the day-lotuses close. (731-735) When an elephant in rut cows face to face with a roaring lion, he forgets to put his foot down which he had raised (to attack an enemy). So when the sattvic steadiness rises in the heart, all the activities of the mind, life-breath and senses come to a stop. Then the bond between the senses and their objects automatically ceases and all the senses enter the womb of their mother i.e. the mind (instead of turning to their objects). The prana, which moves upward and upward, being blocked, along with the nine different vital airs, enters the sushumna nadi, and the mind being stripped of its garments in the form of desires and fancies, the intellect remains quiet behind it (736-740). In this way that firm steadiness brings the functions of the mind, vital airs and senses to a standstill: and confines them through the power of yoga in the chamber of meditation. It then keeps them shut up there and prevents them from succumbing to any temptations, until it delivers them to their Lord, the Supreme Self. That is the sattvic steadiness, so said the Lord of goddess Lakshmi to Arjuna.

34. *But that firmness by which one holds fast, O Arjuna, to duty, pleasure and wealth, through attachment, desiring their fruit, that firmness, O Partha, arises from rajas quality.*

When the embodied Self remains in the enjoyment of duty. Wealth and sensual pleasures in both the heaven (741-745) and the earth, he carries on his business of the above three aims of life in the sea of desires. When he sees that by investing capital in the form of actions, he reaps fourfold profit from it, he conducts his affairs with firmness. The firmness with which he exerts himself is called rajasic firmness. Now I shall tell you the characteristics of tamasic firmness.

35. *That by which a dull-witted person does not forego sleep, fear and grief, as also despair and delusion, that firmness, O Partha, arises from tamas quality.*

This (tamasic) firmness is made up of all heinous qualities, as coal is formed of a black substance. Why then call such a mean and base thing as a quality? But do we not describe a demon as meritorious person (punyajana) (746-750)? We also call the planet Mars, which burns like a live coal as auspicious (mangala). So the word quality is employed in respect of the tamas quality without much thought. It has a close relation with sloth; and sleep does not leave a tamasic person, as misery does not desert a person who nurtures sin. Just as a stone does not lose its hardness, so fear does not leave him, as he is attached to the body and wealth. As sin never deserts an ungrateful person, grief dwells in him because of his attachment to wordily things (751-755). As he harbours discontent in the heart day and night, melancholy is his constant companion. Foul smell never leaves garlic, or disease never leaves a patient who does not follow the prescribed diet; so despondency does not desert him till death. As his infatuation for youth, wealth and desire increases, arrogance makes its home in his heart. Just as fire does not shed its heat, or the snake his spite, fear which is the foe of all dwells in him incessantly. Just as the god of death does not forget the body, so arrogance has a fixed abode in him (756-760). So know that the firmness which is sustained by five flaws (viz. sloth, sleep, fear. despondency and arrogance) is steadiness of tamas quality, so said Shri Krishna, Lord of the world.

He further added: the intellect decides what action should be undertaken, and firmness carries out that action to its successful end. Even though a person sees the way in the sunlight, he' has to walk over it with his own feet, but he has to make up his mind to do so. So the intellect shows the way to action and makes available the means also. (761-765) But one must have steadiness to see it through. In this way I have explained to you three kinds of firmness.

Now when actions are performed, they bear the fruit which is known as happiness which is also threefold according to the actions. I shall now explain to you in clear terms how this happiness becomes different on account of the three qualities. But how can I describe it in a pure form? Because when the words describing it are heard, they are defiled by the wax in the ears. You should, therefore, discard the aid of the ears or even external attention and hear it with the aid of the heart (766-770). Saying this the Lord began to describe the three-fold happiness, which I shall now explain.

36. And hear from Me, O best of Bharatas, about the three kinds of happiness. That in which ' one derives pleasure from practice and puts an end to sorrow;

O intelligent Arjuna, now hear about the threefold happiness, which I had promised to tell you. I shall explain to you in words by which you will be able to understand happiness which results from the union of a human being with his Self. Even a patent medicine has to be taken in appropriate doses, tin has to be electroplated with silver by alchemy or water has to be poured twice or thrice to dissolve salt (771-775). In the same way, when a person secures a little pleasure and continues his yogic practice, all the miseries of his mundane life come to an end. The happiness of the Self so attained by him is of three kinds. I shall tell them one by one.

37. Tat which is first like venom, but like nectar in the end, and which arises from the purity of the mind, that happiness is said to be of sattva quality.

When the base of a sandalwood tree is encircled by serpents it causes fright, so does a hidden treasure when guarded by a spirit. One has to take the trouble of performing sacrifices in order to gain celestial pleasures. The childhood becomes intolerable because of suffering. One has to put up with the nuisance of smoke in lighting a lamp. And the tongue has to suffer the bitter taste of medicine before cure. (776-780) As in all such ways, O Arjuna, in order to gain spiritual pleasure one has to bear initially the discomforts resulting from the practice of self-control and sense-restraint. It is only when intense dispassion towards worldly pleasures wells up in the heart, it pulls down the hedge between worldly existence and heaven. When he listens to discourses on discriminating knowledge and practises hard vows and rites, the intellect etc. are sorely tried. One has to swallow the currents of prana and apana by the mouth of the sushumna nadi. One has to suffer such great hardships from the very beginning. Intense grief is suffered by the chakravaka pair at their forced separation, by the calf when ft is dragged away from the cow's udder, or by the beggar when he is removed from his' dining plate (781-785) or by the mother whose only child is snatched away by death, or by the fish which is taken out of water. In the same way the sense-organs feel that the end of the epoch has come, when they have to part from their objects. Yet being free from attachment, they face that pain with great courage. So by bearing hardships at the very beginning they attain to supreme bliss, as the gods secured nectar by churning the sea of milk. If steadiness in the form of Lord Shiva. comes forward to drink the venom in the form of asceticism, then it feasts upon the nectar of knowledge. The sour taste of unripe grapes is more burning to the tongue than the touch of a firebrand; yet the same grapes, when ripe, become sweet (786-790). So when dispassion becomes ripe in the light of the knowledge of Self, all pain born of ignorance vanishes along with dispassion. As the river meets the sea,

so intellect merges in the Self, revealing the mine of non-dual bliss. So that which is rooted in dispassion and culminates in the peace of Self-realisation is said to be sattvic happiness.

38. *That which arises from the contact of the senses with their object, which is like nectar at first but like poison in the end, that happiness is known to be of rajas quality.*

When the senses come into contact with the sense-objects, the rajasic happiness overflows on both banks. Just as people celebrate the visit of a high officer to their village, or a wedding is celebrated by incurring a heavy debt (791-795), or bananas and sugar taste sweet to a patient, though he is prohibited form eating them, or the poisonous root when in the mouth tastes sweet, so the contact of senses with their sense-objects gives pleasure at first like the friendship of a polished thief, or the behaviour of a harlot or a mummer's performance. But that pleasure comes to an end and the wealth of merit which he had earned dries up, ending with the loss of life much in the same way as the swan, mistaking the reflections of the stars in water as gems, makes a swoop to seize them and dashing against a rock, loses its life. Then all his sensual enjoyments vanish as if it was all a dream and all that remains for him to do is to rot in the ditch of pain (796-800). Thus this pleasure terminates in misfortune and becomes toxic even in the next world. When the senses are fondled by making over to them the orchard of religious ' merle, they destroy the religious merit and offer instead the festive sensuous enjoyments. In this way sins, getting stronger, take such persons to hell. Thus worldly pleasures cause harm in the other world. Although poison is called mahur i.e. sweet, it becomes fatal in the end and reveals its true nature. Thus worldly pleasure which tastes sweet in the beginning proves bitter in the end. This pleasure, O Partha, is formed of the rajas quality; so take care not to touch it even with a long pole (801-805).

39. *That pleasure which is delusive to oneself, at first as well as in the end, which arises from sleep, sloth and heedlessness, is deemed to be of tamas quality*

O Partha, know that pleasure to be of tamas quality, which is derived by drinking wine, eating meat or in the company of a woman of loose character or by treachery, or by depriving somebody of his wealth or by flattery of a bard, or which is fed by sloth or slumber, and which, right from beginning to the end, deludes him and makes him go astray from the right path. – I will not explain it to you in detail, because it is impossible to-- do so. Thus I have disclosed to you in accordance with the scriptures the distinctive features of happiness depending upon distinct actions (806-810). Whatever things there are in this world, big or small, none of them is

without the agent, action and fruit. O Arjuna, as the cloth is made up of yarn, so this triad is woven by three qualities.

40. *There is not a thing on this earth nor yet among the gods in heaven, that is free from these qualities born of prakriti.*

    Therefore, bear in mind that there is nothing in this world or in heaven which is not bound by these three qualities. How can there be a blanket without wool, a clod without clay, or waves without water? So no beings in this creation are free from being constituted by these qualities. (811-815) So all things in this world are made up of these three qualities. It is these qualities which have made one God into three gods (namely Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva), who have created the three worlds (heaven, earth and the nether world), and have assigned different duties to the four castes.

41. *Of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras, O oppressor of the foes, the duties have been distributed according to the qualities born of their natures.*

    If you ask me which are the four castes, the Brahmins are the foremost among them. Two other castes are the Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, who enjoy the same high position as the Brahmins. These three are authorised to perform the Vedic rites. O winner of wealth, the fourth caste consisting of the Shudras is not so qualified and has to depend upon the other three castes (816-820). But because these Shudras are closely connected with the three castes, they are reckoned as the fourth caste. The scriptures have included the Shudras in the castes, as they have close connection with the twice-born, in the same way as the rich smell the flowers of a garland along with its thread. Such is the arrangement of the fourfold caste system. I shall now tell you their respective functions, by performing which these four castes escape from the pair of scissors in the form of birth and death and attain to the Supreme Self. These functions have been distributed among the four castes according to the three qualities of the prakriti (821-825). Just as a father divides his property among his sons, or the sun shows the different paths to different wayfarers, or the master assignees different duties to servants, so the three qualities have distributed the functions among the four castes. There the sattva quality divides itself into two irregular parts and creates the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas. the Vaishya caste came into being through the mixing of the sattva and rajas qualities and the Shudra caste was formed out of the combination of the rajas and tamas qualities. In this way, O wise Arjuna though the entire humankind formed a single group, they were divided into four different castes because of the three gunas (826-830). Then just as a lamp shows a thing in the dark, so the scripture shows the functions as differentiated by the qualities. O Lucky Arjuna, I shall tell you what the distinctive functions of these four castes are.

42. *Self-control, restraint of the senses, austerity and purity, forbearance and an upright nature, knowledge, realisation and belief in God are the duties of a Brahmin, born of his own nature.*

Just as a chaste wife embraces her husband in private, so the intellect of a Brahmin along with the senses meets the Self. This: serene state of the intellect is known as self-control and all his actions arise from that quality. The second quality chastises the unruly sense-organs by showing them cudgels in the form of scriptural injunctions and prevents them from going astray. (831-835) This quality, which lends a helping hand to self-control, is known as restraint of the senses. Just as on the sixth day of the birth of a child, the flame of a lamp is watched during the night so that it does not get extinguished, so he keeps thinking of God all the time. This is known as austerity, which is the third function of a Brahmin. Among these functions is the quality of purity, which is two-fold. The mind is full of pure thoughts and the body is adorned with good actions, thus making the life pure both internally and externally. This state is called purity, O Partha, and that is the fourth quality found in the actions of a Brahmin. Now the all-enduring power like that of the earth is called forbearance. (836-840) This is the fifth quality of the actions of a Brahmin, which is as sweet as the fifth musical note. The river flows straight to the sea, even if its currents are crooked, or the sugar-cane has the same sweetness even if its joints are irregular, so to behave in a straightforward manner with even a hostile person is the sixth quality known as straightforwardness. Just as the gardener waters the tree at its root and labours over it in the full knowledge that his labour will find its reward when the tree bears fruit, so that by which one knows that by performing actions strictly according to the scriptural injunctions one attains the Supreme Self is knowledge (841-845). This knowledge is the seventh quality in a Brahmin. Then when the intellect merges definitely in the nature of the Self at the time of purification of the Self resulting from scriptural knowledge or the power of meditation, it is said to be realisation. This is the eighth gems in the form of quality. Belief in the existence of God is the nineth quality. As the keeper of the royal seal, whoever he may be, is served by the public, so whoever follows the path laid down by the scripture is endowed with this quality. The possession of this quality in an eminent degree is the true function of a Brahman (846-850). In this way, wherever these nine qualities are seen without a taint, that is the natural function of a Brahmin. Thus a Brahmin wears a necklace of these nine gems and is verily the ocean of these nine gems (ratnakara). Just as the sun is always endowed with his light, or the Jasmine tree is decorated with its own flowers or the sandalwood tree is permeated by its own fragrance, so these nine virtues are the spotless ornaments of a Brahmin and do not remain separate from the person of a Brahmin. Now, I shall tell you the proper duties of a Kshatriya, please listen with all your intelligence (851-855)

43. *Heroism, martial lustre, firmness dexterity, as also non-retreating from battle, generosity and rulership are the duties of a Kshatriya, born of his own nature.*

The sun never expects any help in giving light nor does the lion seek anybody's company in hunting. In the same way possession of innate strength without anybody's help is heroism, which is the foremost virtue of a Kshatriya. The sun with its light makes numerous stars invisible, but the stars along with the moon are not able to make the sun imperceptible. That which takes the whole world by surprise by its own grandeur, but does not lose its courage under any circumstance is his adventurous spirit, which is the second virtue of a Kshatriya known as majesty and firmness is his third virtue (856-860). Even if the sky were to come down with a crash, his mind and intellect do not become unsettled and this is real firmness. However deep the water may be, the lotus comes up and blooms over it or however high a thing is, the sky towers above it; so however serious ' the situation may be he remains engaged in his work. This is the fourth virtue of a Kshatriya known as dexterity. Now the martial spirit is the fifth virtue of the warrior class. Just as the sunflower plant remains facing the sun, so a Kshatriya stands face to face before his enemy and fights with him. (861-865) Just as a pregnant woman avoids, by whatever means, intercourse with her husband, so he does not retreat from the battlefield turning his back to the enemy. This is the fifth virtue of a Kshatriya, which surpasses the first four virtues, as devotion surpasses the four principal ends of human life. When a tree bears fruits and flowers, it drops them down, the bed of the lotus plants generously spreads out fragrance, and the moonlight can be enjoyed by everyone to his heart's content. In the same way, he gives gifts to those who beg for them according to their wishes. This is the sixth virtue known as - generosity. To become the only centre from which flows authority (866-870) and to protect the subjects and enjoy life after keeping them contented, in the way as one nourishes one's organs and makes them robust enough to render service to oneself, is known as rulership. This power of governance, which is the prince among the virtues of a warrior, is the seventh virtue. As the sky looks resplendent with the seven sages (the Great Bear), so these seven virtues beginning with heroism adorn a warrior. The actions which are endowed with these seven virtues are the natural qualities of a Kshatriya. (871-875) Such a person is not only a warrior, but is the Meru mountain of gold which supports seven heavens in the form of the seven virtues. He is like the earth surrounded by the seven sees or like the splendid holy Ganges formed of seven currents in the form of these seven virtues. But enough of this detailed description; actions which are endowed with these seven virtues are natural to the warrior class. I shall now tell you duties proper to ' the Vaishya caste.

44. *Farming, cattle-rearing and trade are the duties of a Vaishya, born of his own nature. Work consisting of service is the duty of a Shudra, born of his own nature.*

To make vast profits on the threefold capital of land, seed and the plough (876-880), in short, farming, rearing of cattle and buying commodities cheap and selling them at higher prices and to maintain themselves by performing such actions is the natural duty of the Vaishya caste. And to render service to the twice-born, vtz. the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas, is the function of the Shudras. It is not for them to undertake any work other than service to the twice born. Thus I have described to you the 'duties prescribed for the four castes.

45. *Man attains to perfection by being devoted to his own duty. Hear (now) how one achieves perfection by being intent upon one's duty.*

O intelligent Arjuna, just as the organs have their proper objects such as sound, so these different duties are proper for the four castes (881-885). Rain water falling from the sky has as its proper destination the river and the river the sea. In the same way, the performance of proper actions according to the caste (varna) and stage of life (ashrama) becomes the performer, as fair complexion becomes a handsome person. Please, therefore, fix your mind on performing your natural duties as laid down by the scriptures. - Just as one should get one's jewel tested by a jeweller, one should know one's duty by reference to the scriptures. Even if one's vision is good, it is of no avail in the dark without lamplight.

If one does not know which way to go, of what use are the legs to him (886-890)? Therefore, one must know by reference to the scripture what duty is proper for him according to his caste. If the treasure in the house is shown by the lamplight, what problem is there in securing it? In the same way, he performs his prescribed duties that have fallen to his lot and have the sanction of the scriptures. He is then engrossed in the performance of these duties, giving up lassitude and renouncing the fruit of action. Just as water flowing in a stream does not go any other way, so his actions are in accordance with the scriptures (891-895). He who performs his prescribed actions acquires non-attachment, which is an entrance to emancipation. Then he does not get involved in either prescribed or prohibited actions and so is freed from mundane existence. Just as one does not wish to place his foot im a stock made of even sandalwood, so he does not pay attention, even out of fun, to motivated action. Then he dissolves the obligatory duties which he performs by the renunciation of their fruit and reaches the border of liberation. In this way he is released from good or bad affairs of worldly existence and acquires non-attachment, which is the threshold of liberation. (896-900) This non attachment, is the boundary of his good fortune leading to liberation and is the culmination of all his

labours in the path of action. It is the flower of the tree in the form of good actions which makes, certain the attainment of liberation and the seeker gently places his foot on this flower like a bee. This non-attachment is like the dawn, which heralds the sun-rise in the form of Self-realisation. It is the divine collyrlum, which shows him the buried treasure in the form of Self-knowledge and he applies it whole heatedly to his inward eye. In this way, O Arjuna, by performing prescribed actions, he makes himself worthy for the attainment of liberation (901-905). This prescribed duty is the sole support to the seeker and its performance is the highest service to me, the all-pervasive Supreme God. The chaste wife shares all pleasures with her husband and the work undertaken by her for her husband is a kind of austerity. A child cannot sustain itself without the help of its mother and so it becomes its bounden duty to serve her. The Ash living in the holy waters of the Ganges acquires the merit accruing from contact with all holy waters. When the seeker, therefore, performs his prescribed duties with the thought that he has no other choice, he places God under his obligation (906-910). It is the intention of God that everyone should perform the duties which are prescribed for him. If he does his appointed work properly, he attains to God without doubt. If a maid-servant passes the test of devoted service to her master. she attains the status of his mistress. If a servant is ready to sacrifice his life in the service of his master, he receives a grant of land in perpetuity from him. In the same way to carry out the will of God is to render great service to him. O Arjuna, any action other than this is only a commercial transaction.

46. *He from whom proceeds the activity of beings and by whom all this is pervade by worshipping him through his action, man attains perfection.*

Therefore, in this way he not only performs his prescribed duty, but follows the will of the Supreme Self who has created this universe. God prepares the puppets in the form of beings from rags in the form of ignorance and makes them dance by pulling the strings with three folds in the form of egoism, consisting of the three qualities (911-915). Just as the lamp is filled with light in and out, so this universe is pervaded by the Supreme Self. O brave Arjuna, this Supreme Self becomes pleased, if he is worshipped with flowers in the form of performance of prescribed duties. If the Supreme Self becomes propitiated with this worship, he grants the devotee the gift of non-attachment as a token of his grace. Then he only thinks of God, as a ' result of which he feels a nausea for the pleasures of the world as for vomitted food. Just as a faithful wife, suffering the pangs of separation from her husband, Ands her life unbearable, so he feels all worldly enjoyments as painful. (916-920) Thus even before the attainment of knowledge of the Supreme, his mind thinks of Him and becomes identified with Him. For this reason he who takes the vow of liberation should perform his duties with zeal.

47. *Better is one's own duty, though defective; than another's duty well-performed in doing work as dictated by one's own nature, one does not incur sin.*

Even though one's own duty is difficult to perform, one should keep in view its ultimate result. If one feels better by eating the seeds of the Neem tree, one should not mind its bitterness. Would it be wise to cut down the banana tree before it has borne fruit (921-925)? In the same way if a person were to give up his duty on the ground that it is hard to perform, he would be deprived of the bliss of liberation. Even if a child's mother is ugly, the motherly love on which it is sustained is not ungainly. The mothers of other children may be more beautiful than the nymph Rambha, but of what avail are they to the child? O Arjuna, the ghee has better qualities than water, but can the fish live in it? Look, what is poison to the world is like nectar to the germs and what is jaggery to the world proves fatal to these germs (926-930). For this reason, a person should perform the prescribed duties, by which alone he can hope to attain liberation, though it may be difficult to accomplish. If he were to perform another's duty thinking it to be better than his own, it is like walking on his head instead of his legs. Therefore, if one performs one's duty which has fallen to his lot according to his birth, he alone triumphs over the bonds of action. Then why should one not make it a rule that one will observe only one's own dharma and not follow another's duty? Can one really stop work before one has not had the vision of Self? And if there is action to be performed, it is bound to entail physical labour. (931-935)

48. *One should not abandon one's duty, O Son of Kunti, even though it may be faulty; for all actions are overlaid by defects as fire is with smoke.*

Since every action involves labour in the beginning, then why should one find fault with one's duty on the ground that it is laborious? O Arjuna, one becomes equally fatigued, even if one walks on a highway or a bypath. Whether one carries a stone or provision for the journey, the burden is the same. Therefore, one should carry the burden which will relieve fatigue caused by the journey at the rest-house. Pounding corn or chaff involves the same labour, so does cooking meat or cooking food for sacrificial purposes. O intelligent Arjuna, one has to toil equally in churning curds and water or in crushing sand and sesame in an oil-mill (936-940). One has to suffer from smoke, if one kindles fire for an obligatory sacrifice or for other work. One has to incur expenditure equally in supporting a wife or a kept woman. Why then incur the odium of a scandal by keeping a mistress? If one cannot avoid death by turning one's back to the enemy, then why should one not face the enemy and fight with him? If a lady from a good family has to bear the blows of a stick in another's house, does it not mean that she has made a mistake in leaving her husband because he beat her? If therefore, we cannot avoid physical labour in performing

any action even of our liking, then how can we complain that the prescribed action is difficult to perform (941-945)? Why not spend all we have to get a little quantity of nectar that makes life immortal? Why should one buy poison, drink it and die and also incur the sin of committing suicide? In the same way, if a person accumulates sin by slogging his senses and wasting his life, what does he gain except misery? It. is, therefore, meet that one should perform one's duty which removes fatigue and helps one to attain liberation, which is the highest end of human life. O Arjuna, just as one should not forget the tested formula (siddha mantra) in a difficult situation, so one should not give up one's duty at any time (946-950). As one who wishes to cross the sea should not forget to take the barge or one who is suffering from leprosy should not forget to take the medicine, so his intellect should not forget to follow his duty. When God is propitiated by worship in the form of performance of one's duty, he destroys the rajas and tamas qualities of the worshipper, leads him along the road of sattva quality and makes him feel heaven and earth like poison. Then the seeker attains the plane of non- attachment described under the term perfection before (XVIII.95). Now I shall state how the seeker behaves after attaining this plane of yoga and what position he secures thereby (951-955).

49. *He whose intellect is unattached to all things, who is self-restrained and free from desire, attains through renunciation (of the fruit of action) the highest perfection which is freedom from action.*

As the wind is not entangled in a net, he is not entangled in the snares of mundane existence such as the body. Just as when the fruit becomes ripe it does not cling to the stem, nor the stem remains attached to the fruit, so his attachment to the worldly life diminishes. Even though his son, wealth and wife act according to his wishes, he does not call them his own. Now his intellect which had been scorched by sensual enjoyments turns inward to the contemplation of the Self. Even if his mind wanders and comes into contact with sense- objects, he never forgets the oath he has taken not to go after them (956-960). Then holding his mind in the grip of unity, he makes it cherish the Self. Just as the smoke is smothered by the dust covering the Are, his desire for sense- enjoyment in this and the next world is destroyed. In short, he attains to this plane of Yoga. With the cessation of false knowledge, he remains absorbed in the knowledge of the Self. Just as stored water gets exhausted by gradual use, so his accumulated karma from past lives gets expiated by being enjoyed in his present body and his mind does not feel like doing fresh deeds (961-965). When he attains equanimity of the mind through righteous actions, he meets his Guru without any effort on his part. When the four prahars (twelve hours) of the night are over, the sun who is the enemy of the darkness makes his appearance. When the plantain bears a bunch of bananas, its growth comes to a stop. In the same way, when the seeker

meets the Guru, he becomes perfect (and his activity comes to an end). O great warrior, just as the moon goes into its full phase on the night of the full moon and lacks nothing, so he does not remain in want by the grace of the Guru. Just as darkness disappears along with the night, so through the favour of his Master, his ignorance vanishes (966-970). Just as with the slaughter of a pregnant woman her foetus is also killed, so with the destruction of ignorance, the triad of action, agent and the instruments of action also ceases. In this way, there is total renunciation of action. When ignorance, which is the root cause of action, is destroyed, even the name of mundane existence becomes obliterated and the knower himself becomes that which is to be known. If a person dreams that he was drowning in deep waters in a river, will he make an effort after waking up to save himself from drowning? In the same way, when the bad dream that 'I am ignorant, now I have attained knowledge', comes to an end, his notions of the knowing agent -and the object of knowledge cease and he himself becomes all-pervasive knowledge. (971-975) When the mirror is set aside, the reflection as well as the act of seeing in the mirror stop and the seer then remains alone. So when ignorance ceases, that act of knowing also ceases and only the inactive Self remains behind. O Arjuna, as the Self by nature is not active, this state is called actionlessness (naishkarmya). Until now we thought ourselves to be different from our essential nature. But when the breeze stops, the waves in the ocean also get dissolved in the sea; so this state of cessation of activity is known as the perfect state of actionlessness and it is the highest of all perfection. (976-980) Just as the temple reaches its final stage with the construction of the dome, or the flow of the Ganges stops when it joins the sea, or the gold is purified after it becomes twenty-four carrot gold, so with the cessation of ignorance, knowledge also ceases and the stage is reached when all activity comes to an end. When this state is attained, nothing remains to be achieved and so it is called the highest perfection. But this state of self-realization is attained by a lucky one only through the grace of his teacher.

50. *Learn from Me in brief, O Arjuna, how after winning perfection, one attains to Brahman, which is the highest state of wisdom.*

When the sun rises, light envelops darkness from all sides. When camphor comes into contact with lamp, it becomes a lamp. (981-985) When a granule of salt is dropped in water it becomes water. When a person wakes up from sleep his sleep along with dream ends and he resumes his conscious state. So if he hears the instruction of the Master through good fortune, his mind sheds the notion of duality and rests in the nature of Self. Then can anyone say that there remains any action to be performed by him? Is there anything like coming and going possible in the case of the all-pervading sky? Without doubt there remains nothing for him to do. But in the case of a particular seeker it so happens (986-990) that

he does not become one with Brahman immediately after hearing the words of the preceptor. It may be that he has kindled the fire in the form of the performance of his prescribed actions by feeding it with the firewood in the form of innovated and prohibited actions and burnt the rajas and tamas qualities. Then he may have brought under his control like a servant his craving for sons, wealth and heaven. He may have cleansed in the holy waters of sense-restraint his wayward senses defiled by the enjoyment of sense-objects (991-995). He may have followed all the paths of spiritual disciplines to attain the vision of the pure Self. And lastly after he met the preceptor, the latter may have instructed him in the knowledge of the Self withholding nothing from him. But can a patient recover from his illness immediately after taking medicine and resume his former state? Or does it become noon immediately after sunrise? Or can one reap a harvest immediately after sowing seed in a fertile and well-watered field? All this requires time. Even if there is a straight road and a good companion, it requires time to reach the destination (996-1000). In this way, after attaining non-attachment he meets the preceptor and discrimination rises in his mind; then he becomes convinced through discriminating knowledge that Brahman alone is real and that the world is an illusion. Then all activity to secure liberation comes to an end in Brahman, which is all-pervading and Supreme, and he attains the knowledge of Self, which destroys the knowing agent, the knowable object and the means of knowledge. Then there remains only the oneness of unity and whatever particle of joy he had also gets dissolved. (1001-1005) But this union with Supreme Brahman is attained only gradually. If a delicious meal is served to a hungry person, he attains satisfaction after taking every morsel; in the same way the seeker attains the treasure in the form of Self after lighting the lamp of discrimination. If the seeker wishes to attain fitness to enjoy the grandeur of self-knowledge, I shall describe to you the stages by which he attains it. (1006-1010)

51. *Endowed with pure intellect, controlling the Self with firmness and having abandoned the sense-objects such as sound and casting away passion and hatred,*

He follows the path indicated by the teacher and reaching the bank of holy waters in the form of discrimination, he washes off the impurity of his intellect. Just as the moonlight released by the demon Rahu (i.e. after the eclipse is over) embraces the moon, so his intellect, after being purified, becomes attracted to the Self. Just as a woman from a good family leaves the homes of her parents and parents-in-law and follows her husband, so his intellect, discarding the notion of dualism, becomes absorbed in the meditation of the Self. He has eliminated the Five sense-objects, which he had prized so long in the life of acquiring the desired knowledge, in the same way as the withdrawal of the rays by the sun (at sunset) destroys the mirage (1011-1015). Just as one who has taken food unknowingly in

the house of a low-caste person is forced to vomit it, so he has banished sensuous desires from the senses. Then after withdrawing the senses from the sense-objects, he brings them to the bank of the Ganga in the form of the mind and washes them clean through atonement. Then after purifying the senses with sattvic fortitude, he keeps them engaged in the practice of yoga. When he is required to experience the fruits of his past deeds, good or bad, he does not grieve over his sufferings or long for enjoyments (1016-1020). Thus he does not feel joy or grief at good or bad happenings and resorts to a cave or recess on a mountain.

52. *Dwelling in solitude, eating sparingly, subdued in speech, body and mind, ever intent on the practice of meditation, and resorting to dispassion,*

He dwells in solitude in a forest far from the maddening crowd in company of his own body and organs. Restraint of the senses and self- control become his recreation and he observes silence. He is not even conscious how his time passes in meditating over the instruction of his Guru. He never gives any thought at the time of taking his food as to how he should maintain his strength, satisfy his hunger or cater to the peculiar taste of his palate. The contentment which he derives from a frugal meal is beyond measure (1021-1025). He is afraid that if he does not feed the abdominal fire, it will take away his life, and so he eats in moderation to sustain life. He does not disturb his posture, in the same way as a chaste woman does not succumb to a person (who is not her husband) who expresses a desire for her. His body touches the floor only when he protrates it before God; otherwise he does not commit the wanton act of rolling on the floor. He makes the movements of his hands and feet to the extent necessary to maintain himself. In short, he keeps his mind and senses under his control. He does not allow his inclinations even to reach the threshold of the mind (i.e. rise to consciousness). Then what scope is there for giving expression to them in words (1026-1030)? After conquering body, speech and mind, he turns to the sky of concentrated meditation. Just as one sees one's face clearly in the mirror, he then scrutinizes the nature of his Self as instructed by his Guru.

Meditation ordinarily consists of the meditator, the state of meditation and the object of meditation. O Son of Pandu, one has to meditate until the object of meditation, the act of meditation and the meditation all become one. Therefore the seeker who is intent upon attaining the knowledge of Self takes recourse to the yoga of meditation (1031-1035). Then pressing the heel of his right foot against the perineum between the genital organs and the rectum and contracting the lower region, he practices the three bandhas (physico-psychic postures) and he unites the life- breaths. With the control of breath the Serpent Power wakes up and when the passage of Sushumna opens up, she ascends by piercing all the six centres from the Muladhara to the Ajna. Then the cloud in the form of thousand petalled

lotus in the brahmarandhra sends showers of nectar, which flows through the sushumna passages until it reaches the Muladhara centre. Then the Kundalini places in a broken piece of a pitcher a hotch-potch of cooked rice and pulses in the form of the mind and the breaths before the terrible deity (Bhairava) dancing on the mountain of brahmurandhra (1036-1040). In this way he practices the yogic discipline steadily for the attainment of Self-knowledge and in order to ward off obstacles in the way, he makes friends with non-attachment. This non-attachment keeps him company in all the yogic states. If one has a lamp in hand, why should there by any delay in seeing the desired thing? So long as the seeker has the company of non-attachment, how can he meet with obstacles in his yogic practice (1041-1045)? Therefore, that fortunate person who practices yoga combined with non-attachment becomes qualified for the attainment of Brahman. Such a one who wears the armour of non-attachment and rides on the horse of rajayoga arms himself with the sword of meditation in order to slash any obstacles, big or small, which come in the way. In this way as the sun enters darkness, he enters the battlefield in the form of worldly existence in order to gain victory in the form of deliverance.

53. *Forsaking egoism, strength, arrogance, desire, anger and possessions, free from the sense of 'Me' and Mine, and serene, one becomes fit for the state of Brahman.*

He then destroys all the faults which are hostile to him. The foremost among them is egoism (1046-1050), which does not release him even after death. Nor does it let him live peacefully but keeps him bound in the stocks of bones and makes him miserable. He raizes to the ground the citadel in the form of the body, which is the abode of this egoism. He also destroys his second enemy, which is strength. This enemy waxes strong at the very mention of sense-objects and blots out the whole world. It is the narrow pond of poison in the form of sense-objects as also the chief among the faults. But even this enemy cannot bear the strokes of the sword in the form of meditation. Then he destroys the enemy arrogance which, under the pretext of giving him happiness, entices him in agreeable sense-objects (1051-1055). This third enemy (arrogance) deludes him and makes him miss the path of virtue and enter the jungle in the form of unrighteousness only to fall into the Jaws of a tiger in the form of hell. He destroys this enemy arrogance, which after inspiring trust in it, ruins a person. He then destroys the enemy 'desire', which makes even the ascetics tremble, begets the vicious fault of wrath and remains famished the more it is fed. With the destruction of desire, wrath is automatically destroyed. Just as when the tree is uprooted its branches get destroyed, so the eradication of desire brings about the destruction of wrath (1056-1060). When the desire is stilled, the stirring of anger also comes to an end. Just as a person in authority makes the offender carry the stock (in which his ankles are to be bound) on his head, so his enemy by name

'possession' rides on his head, (corrupts his mind), makes him addicted to vices and compels him to carry the stick of attachment. Because of 'possession' even a detached ascetic becomes entangled in the snares in the form of 'this is my disciple', 'this is my book', 'this is my hermitage'. That possession, which was shaken off after leaving the family, appears in the form of sylvan things in the forest and pursues even a nude ascetic (1061-1065). By knocking off the bottom of this invincible enemy' named 'possession', he experiences the joy of victory over worldly life. Then all the means of knowledge such as absence of pride and others come to pay homage to him like princes in the country of liberation. They offer him tribute in the form of mastery over true knowledge and remain as his retinue. When he proceeds along the highway of activity, young ladies in the form of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep wave around him salt and mustard in the form of pleasure. As he proceeds along, discrimination marches ahead of him, bearing the sceptre in its hand and clears the crowd in the form of manifest things of the world. Then the yogic stages, as it were, come forward to wave Five tiny lamps placed on a platter to felicitate him (1666-1070). The miraculous powers come there to bathe him with a shower of flowers. With the approach of self-government in the form of union with Supreme Brahman, he feels as if all the three worlds are full of bliss. In this state, O Dhananjaya, there remains none whom he can call as his friend or as his enemy. Even if he calls one on a rare occasion as his friend, even then he entertains no idea of duality; he has become so identified with all people. He has pervaded the whole universe by his majesty with the result that no attachment of the form 'This is mine' affects him; for he has given up attachment already (1071-1075). Thus having conquered all his enemies, he regards the whole universe as a non-entity and then the horse in the form of his yogic practice on which he was riding becomes steady. Then he loosens for a moment his impregnable armour of non-attachment and he slackens his hand, as nothing remains for the sword in the form of meditation to slash. Just as the medicine, after serving its purpose, becomes superfluous, similar is his state. Just as walking comes to a halt after reaching the destination, so his yogic practice stops after the attainment of Brahman (1076-1080). The holy Ganges slackens its speed after it joins the sea or an amorous wife calms down after meeting her husband. A plantain stops its growth after bearing fruit or a journey ends after reaching the destination. In the same way, after he knows that he is about to realise the Self, then he lays down slowly his arms in the form of spiritual practices. O Arjuna, when the time comes when he is to attain union with Brahman, then his yogic practice comes to an end. Then he attains perfect peace, which is the consummation of non-attachment, the end of the study of knowledge and the fulfilment of his yogic practice and becomes qualified to become Brahman. (1081-1085) The difference between the Supreme Brahman and the perfected soul qualified to become Brahman is the same as between the moon on the full moon night and the moon on the previous

night or between the 24-carrot gold and 22-carrot gold or between the calm waters of the sea and that part of it into which a river rushes. Then he soon becomes Brahman on account of the perfect peace of mind which he has achieved. This experience of Brahman without becoming one with it is known as the fitness for becoming Supreme Brahman (1086-1090).

54. *Becoming one with Brahman and having a serene mind, he neither grieves nor desires, and being same to all creatures, he attains supreme devotion to Me.*

O Arjuna, he who has become fit for the attainment of the knowledge of Brahman gains serenity of the mind. Just as the food cooked by heating becomes enjoyable only when it cools down or the Ganges becomes calm in winter after the floods cease, the musical instruments cease when the vocal music stops, all the labour put in the attainment of knowledge receives its reward. This state which is attained by the realisation of the Self is well known as serenity - and the enlightened person attains to it (1091-1095). When he is flooded with this state of equanimity, he does not grieve over the loss of a thing or crave for anything. Just as the stars become dim on the rising of the sun, so wherever he looks he does not entertain the notion of distinction between beings. Just as the alphabets written on a slate can be wiped off, all distinctions become obliterated in his view. So the false knowledge which existed in the states of waking and dream becomes merged in ignorance (1096-1100). When the knowledge of the Self increases the ignorance goes on diminishing and finally merges in that knowledge. The hunger gradually diminishes with each mersel of food eaten and ceases when it is fully satisfied. When one marches, the road to be covered gradually diminishes and when the destination is reached, the distance is fully covered. As a person begins to wake up, the sleep gets reduced by and by and ceases altogether with the return of the wakeful state. After the moon remains in full phase on the full moon night, it begins to wane and then the bright fortnight comes to an end (1101-1105). In the same way, when the objects of knowledge cease and the knower becomes merged in me along with the knowledge, then all ignorance disappears. At the time of deluge, all distinctions of sea, river etc. vanish and the whole world is covered with water. When the limiting conditions such as the earthen pot or the hermitage disappears, only the sky remains or when the firewood is burnt then only fire remains. When the ornaments are melted in a crucible with heat, they lose their name and form and only gold remains. When a person wakes up, the dream vanishes and only the dreamer remains (1106-1110). So my devotee does not see anything except myself. He thus attains the fourth form of devotion. This is called the fourth kind in order to distinguish it from the devotion of one in distress, of the seeker of knowledge and of the seeker of riches. If you reflect upon it, there is no such devotion as third or the fourth, or even the first and the last. In fact that which is my innate state is

devotion. But a devotee is misled by ignorance in that he conceives me in a form different from my essential nature and worships it. The devotee who conceives me thus maintains his faith in that form (1111-1115). Just as the appearance or non-appearance of a dream depends on the existence of one (dreamer), so the natural light by which one sees the existence or non- existence of the universe 1s what is known as devotion. When this devotion takes the form of a strong desire in an afflicted person, I become the object of that desire. O great warrior, when this devotion takes the form of desire for knowledge in a seeker of knowledge, I become the object of that desire for knowledge. O Arjuna, when this devotion takes the form of desire to achieve an end, I become that end, all-in-all for him (1116-1120). In this way this devotion operates through ignorance, to show me who am the seer as the object to be seen. When one's face is reflected in the mirror, the apparent duality (constituted by the face and its reflection) is due to the mirror. The normal sight sees only one moon, but if one suffers from a disease known as timir (an affliction of the optic nerve), then he sees two moons. So although I am worshipped everywhere, because of ignorance men conceive me as an object of knowledge. When the mirror is taken away, the reflection merges itself into its original; so when the ignorance vanishes, then the state of seeing inherent in the seeing agent merges into me. (1121-1125) Even when gold is mixed with an alloy, it remains as pure gold and when the alloy is burnt out, the residue remains as pure gold. Is not the moon endowed with all its phases before the full moon night? But it appears in all its phases on that night. In the same way. I too am seen as distinct from the seeing agent because of the mental states. When the state of seeing disappears, I become my true Self. So, know, O Partha, that which is known as the fourth kind of devotion transcends others (which involve the dualism between the seer and the seen).

55. *Through devotion he knows Me truly, who I am and how great; then having known Me in essence, he forthwith enters into the Supreme.*

You have heard before that the devotee who attains union with Me through this knowledge-cum-devotion, becomes one with Me (1126-1130). For, O Arjuna, I declared to you with outstretched arms in the seventh chapter that this jnani-bhakta is my very soul. I taught this devotion as the best to God Brahma in the form of Bhagawata Dharma at the beginning of the epoch. The Sankhyas call it 'the knowledge of the Self,' the Shaivites call it 'the Power of God (S*hakti*)' and we call it Supreme devotion. One who travels step by step on the path of yoga becomes one with Me and attains this devotion. Then he comes to know that this universe is pervaded by Me. (1131-1135) Then non-attachment along with discrimination, bondage along with salvation and activity along with renunciation come to an end. Just as the sky remains behind swallowing all the four elements (at the time of dissolution), he becomes one with My

spotless and pure state which is beyond the means and the end and enjoys Supreme bliss. Just as the river Ganges meets the sea and shines in this mingled state, similar to it is this enjoyment of the Supreme bliss. As a mirror sees its own reflection in a mirror placed in front of it, so he experiences the bliss of Brahman. But when the mirror is kept aside, the reflection vanishes and the seeing agent remains alone in the enjoyment of himself (1136-1140). After the dream disappears in the wakeful state, then a person remains conscious of himself, and he enjoys his single state all alone.

One may raise a doubt and say that there cannot be any experience after union with Brahman. We ask such a doubter, "How can a word utter a word? Is it that in the country of such a person one can see the sun in the light of a lamp or is it necessary to make a canopy for the sky? Can a king enjoy his royal position, if he does not possess the royal attributes? How could a thing have a conception of the sky unless it is the sky itself? How can ornaments of gold equal an ornament made of gems? (1141-1145) So how can one who has not become one with Me know what I am? If not, how can one say that he is devoted to Me? For this reason, he who practises yoga step by step becomes one with Me and enjoys the bliss of My Self. As a maiden enjoys her youth, or the ripples kiss the water, or the splendour of the sun shines in the sun's disc, or the space pervades the sky, so he becomes one with Me and worships Me without overt action. Just as gold inheres in the ornament, the fragrance is diffused in the sandalwood, or the moonlight abides in the moon (1146-1150), non-dual devotion takes place even though he does not perform any action. This cannot be expressed in words, it can be realised only through experience. Then whatever he says because of the latent impressions of his past actions or calls Me, I respond to his call; but there the one who says or calls Is also Myself. If the speaker is also Myself, then no conversation .is possible, and so his silence amounts to praising Me. So when he calls Me and I respond to his call, his calling and praising Me is effected through silence Whatever the devotee sees with his vision of intellect, that seeing does not show him any visible object, but his own Self (1151-1155). Just as the seeing agent sees the same face which was there before he looked into the mirror, so the seeing on the part of the seer makes him view himself. In the absence of an object to be seen, what the seeing agent sees is his own Self. Since there remains nothing but the seeing agent, the seeing has no locus. Just as a person who sees his beloved in a dream and moves forward to embrace her and on waking up finds that he is alone, or as the fire which is ignited by the friction of two sticks. burns both the pieces and remains only as Are, or as the sun goes to seize his reflection in water, then the reflection disappears along with his disc (1156-1160), so he who, after becoming one with Me. goes to see the object, then the act of seeing as also the object to be seen disappear. As the sun sheds his light on the darkness, there remains no darkness on

which to shed light; in the same way the seeing agent does not remain separate from me to see the object.

This state, which is not the result of seeing or not seeing is My real vision. O Arjuna, he retains this vision, when he comes across any visible object and enjoys this state which transcends the seeing agent and the object to be seen. As the sky does not slip being all-persuasive, so he remains unshaken, being merged with the Self. (1161-1165) As water fills the whole earth at the time of deluge and. so does not flow, so the Self who is filled with the Supreme Self remains still. How can the feet go in advance of themselves, how can the fire bum itself and how can water bathe in itself? Since I am all-pervasive, all movements (of the devotee who is merged in Myself) stop and this absence of movement becomes his pilgrimage to My non-dual state. However swiftly the wave moves on water, it cannot leave the water and encroach upon the land. The place which it leaves and the place it goes to, its movement and the means of movement are nothing but water; (1166-1170) wherever the wave moves it is all water, and so the oneness of the wave with water remains undisturbed. So when he starts from the state of oneness with Me and again returns to Me, then this movement of his constitutes his pilgrimage and he becomes My pilgrim. If he performs any action according to his disposition, I myself go to meet him under the pretext of that action. In this state, O Arjuna, the distinction between the deed and the doer disappears, and seeing Me in himself, he becomes one with Me. If a mirror sees into another mirror, it is no seeing at all; or if gold is covered with gold, it is not covered at all; (1171-1175) for a lamp it is not possible to give light to another lamp. So if a person performs any action after becoming one with Me, can we say that the action is performed? If he, while performing action, does not have the egoistic feeling that he is the agent of that action, the doing of that act is tantamount to 'not doing it.' Since he has become one with Me, his 'doing' amounts to 'not doing' and that is a special characteristic of My worship. So, O Arjuna, whenever he performs any action as prescribed, he does nothing and that is My solemn worship. In short, whatever he says is singing My praise, whatever he sees is My vision and wherever he goes that is his pilgrimage to Non-dual Me (1176-1180). O Arjuna, whatever he does becomes my worship, whatever he thinks is muttering My name and whatever state he abides in is his absorption (samadhi) in Me. Just as a gold bangle is non-different from gold, so he has become one with me through the yoga of devotion. Just as 'the wave is not different from water, or the camphor from its odour or the jewel from its glitter, in short, as the cloth inheres in the thread or the earthen pot in clay, so my devotee remains united with Me. O Arjuna, he sees Me in every object by means of this exclusive devotion. (1181-1185)

When he realises that the visible world which appears in the form of the Field and knower of the Field through the three states of wakefulness,

dream and deep sleep is none else but Me, he dances (in great ecstasy) like a big wig. Just as after viewing the rope one becomes convinced that it is not a serpent, although at first sight it appeared to be so, or after the ornaments are melted it is known to be only gold, or that the wave is nothing but water, so he is not deceived by its form (1186-1190). When one wakes up one knows that the things which he saw in the dream were not different from him; so he experiences that whatever becomes manifest as existent and non-existent is he, the knower. Then he says to himself, "I am unborn, ageless, immutable, imperishable, the unique and boundless Bliss. I am the one who does not move or drop down, the infinite, the non-dual, the origin of all, the formless and with form; I am the controller as well as the wielder of power, beginningless, imperishable, fearless, the support as also the object of support (1191-1195). I am the Lord of all, the one who abides everywhere always, easily and continuously and also beyond everything. I am what is new, what is old; I am the Void, I am complete, I am the infinite as also the most subtle; I am actionless, love and griefless, I am that Supreme Person who abides in all things and in whom all things abide. I am beyond speech, without ears, form and kin; I am even, self-dependent, the Supreme Brahman. In this way whoever becomes one with Myself, knows Me through devotion centred in non-dualism and that whatever knowledge he attains is also Myself (1196-1200). When he is awakened, he knows that he is all alone, that he is the sun, the light-giver as well the object lighted and that these two are not different from each other.

When the object of knowledge disappears, only the knower remains and he realises that one who knows is also Myself. He realises that this knowledge of non-dualism is also Myself, the Supreme spirit. Then the knowledge dawns upon him that he himself is the Supreme Self who is beyond dualism and non-dualism and then that knowledge turns into realisation. (1201-1205) Thus, as the state which one attains after waking up disappears, he does not know what state he has entered into, or as the gold ornaments appear as gold without their being melted, or when the salt is dissolved in water, the water acquires the salty taste and when that water becomes evaporated that salty taste too disappears, so when the term 'he' ceases, to exist, how can the term 'I' subsist? In this 'way the notions of 'he' and 'I' cease to exist, and he merges into My being (1205-1210). Just as when the camphor is burnt up, both the camphor and fire also vanish and only the sky beyond them remains or when one is deducted from one the remainder is zero, so what remains after subtracting what is and what is not is Myself. In that state all talk about Brahman, the Self and the Lord becomes meaningless and even refraining from speech also has no scope there. As it can be described fully without talking about not talking, so it is known by discarding the notions of knowledge and ignorance. In that state, knowledge is to be known through knowledge, bliss is to be enjoyed through bliss and happiness is to be

experienced through happiness. (1211-1215) In that state benefit gains more benefit, lustre combines with lustre and wonder is fully drowned in wonder. In that state peace of mind becomes peaceful, rest becomes restful and experience becomes frenzied with experience. What more can I say? As the beautiful creeper of kramayoga is nourished, it produces the winsome fruit in the form of Myself. O Arjuna, I am the crown of that sovereign kramayoga and he in his turn becomes the jewel in the form of knowledge. Or this kramayoga is like a temple and he becomes like the expanse of the sky over the dome of this temple (1216-1220). Or he treads the royal path of kramayoga in the forest of the world and reaches the town in the form of union with Me. The Ganges in the form of his devotion and knowledge flows along with the current of kramayoga and reaches the ocean of bliss in the form of Myself. O discerning Arjuna, such is the greatness of this krarnayoga, that I am describing it to you over and over again.

I am not such a one as can be attained through such means as suitable time, place and material things; because I abide in all things (1221-1225). The traditional relation between the Guru and the disciple has been long in use in order to know the way of attaining to me. O Arjuna, there exist in a ready form treasure in the womb of the earth, Are in wood and milk in the udder of the cow and yet one has to devise means to secure them. In the same way, even though I am self-existent. I can be attained only through suitable means. One may ask as to why, after discoursing so long on the fruit, the Lord is talking about the means of securing it. His opinion seems to be this. The merit of Gita lies in this that liberation is attained by all the means taught in it. The means stated in other scriptures are not necessarily authoritative. (1226-1230). The wind scatters the clouds which cover the sun but cannot create the sun. The moss can be set aside from the water by hand, but one cannot create water. In that way the scripture ' can remove the dirt of ignorance which obscures the knowledge of Self. Otherwise I am spotless and self-luminous, and so all the scriptures are of use in dispelling ignorance. Beyond this they are not free to grant the knowledge of the Self. The Gita is the only scripture where the other scriptures have to come to enquire about this knowledge. When the sun adorns the East, all other directions are also lit up. So all other scriptures have found a patron in the Gita, which is sovereign among them (1231-1235). This Gita has described the means to liberation in the previous chapters in great detail. But the compassionate Lord thought that Arjuna could hardly be expected to grasp his teaching at the very first hearing and so he is going to give a brief discourse on it to impress the meaning of the Gita on the mind of his disciple. Now that the Gita is coming to a close, he is going to demonstrate the unity of its teaching from beginning to the end. It is true that many doctrines have been stated midway in the text according to the qualifications of seekers. (1236-1240) Lest one should think without following the context that all these doctrines have been

expounded in the Gita, the Lord will now establish that all these doctrines are contained in the great doctrine of the Gita and will conclude the doctrine as stated in the beginning. Here the destruction of ignorance is the main topic, the attainment of liberation is its fruit, and knowledge is the means of achieving both. After describing that knowledge in great detail earlier in this work, the Lord is briefly stating it again. Even though the end is in hand, the Lord is again describing the means of achieving it (1241-1245).

56. *Though performing all works, taking refuge in Me, he wins through My grace, the eternal immutable state.*

Then the Lord said, O great warrior, the kramayogi thus becomes one with Me through single-minded devotion and merges in Me. He worships Me thoroughly with pure flowers in the form of the performance of duty and attains, through my grace, to the dedication of knowledge. With the attainment of this dedication of knowledge, his devotion to Me flourishes and he becomes blessed through complete unity with Me. He follows Me, knowing Me as one who illuminates the whole world, after pervading it. Just as salt takes recourse to water and forsakes its hardness, or the wind blowing in the sky rests without motion (1246-1250), so he resorts to Me, with body, speech and mind. If perchance he does any prohibited act after the attainment of knowledge, all actions good or b«d become of a piece with Me, in the same way as the dirty street-water and river-water both become merged in the Ganges. The distinction between sandalwood and other smoky wood lasts only until they are consumed by fire. The distinction between gold and its alloy lasts only so long they do not come into contact with the philosopher's stone. In the same way, the distinction between auspicious and inauspicious things lasts so long as they are not pervaded by My light. (1251-1255) O Partha, so long as one does not enter the region of the sun, the distinction between night and day is felt. So when he meets me all his actions disappear and he attains the state of unity with Me. He attains to that eternal state, which does not get wasted through time, place and nature. O Arjuna, what merit would he not gain, after being blessed with the serenity of Myself?

57. *Resigning mentally all works to Me, and making Me your goal, and resorting to buddhiyoga, keep your mind constantly on Me.*

And so, O winner of wealth, surrender all your actions to Me (1256- 1260). But, O warrior, do not abandon your obligatory actions and fix your mental faculties in discriminating knowledge. You will come to know through this discriminating knowledge my spotless nature which is different from actions and that the Maya which is the source of ignorance is far away from you. Then, O Arjuna, you will realise that this prakriti too is not distinct from the Supreme Self, as the shadow cannot remain without its

original object. In this way when this prakriti is negated, then there will result without any effort total renunciation of action (1261-1265). With the elimination of all actions, only the Self will remain behind and your intellect will become united with him like a chaste wife. So when your intellect will enter Me with unswerving devotion, then your mind Will resort to Me, casting off the other objects of thought. So you should act in such a way that your mind will give up all other thoughts and remain steady in Me.

58. *Thinking of Me you will surmount all obstacles through My grace. But if you, through egoism, will not listen, you will perish.*

When your mind becomes united with Me through whole-hearted devotion, then you will have attained My grace in full. Then all the miseries of birth and death which every human being has to undergo, although hard to overcome, will conduce to your happiness (1266-1270). Who will care for darkness, if his vision receives the support of sunlight? In the same way how will he who has lost his body-consciousness through My grace be afraid of the goblin in the form of worldly affairs? Therefore, O Arjuna, you will be able to escape from the evil trap of worldly existence. But if, out of egoism, you will not listen to My words or pay attention to My teaching, then even if you are eternally free and imperishable, that will be of no avail to you, and you will have to bear the buffets dealt by the body (1271-1275). You will suffer from self-destruction at every step in the bodily actions and will have hardly even a moment's respite from agony. If you do not pay any heed to what I say, you will have to face dreadful torments of a living death.

59. *If resorting to egoism you think that you will not fight, vain is this resolve of yours; (because) your nature will constrain you (to fight).*

If you nourish egoism through the hatred of discrimination, as fever is nourished by the hatred of prescribed diet or darkness is nourished by the hatred of light and if you were to label your body as Arjuna, and those of others as your kinsmen and the war as a sinful act, and if out of such motions you resolve not to fight, (1276-1280), your inborn nature would defeat that resolve. Is there any substance other than Maya (illusion) in your statement that 'I am Arjuna, these are my kinsmen and killing them would amount to a great sin?' It is also queer that you were ready to fight to start with, took up arms in your hands and now you swear that you will not fight. Therefore, this talk of yours that you will not fight is all futile. Even from the worldly point of view, this talk of yours is unacceptable. It is true that you have resolved not to fight, but your inborn warrior's disposition will compel you to fight (1281-1285).

60. *Bound by your sense of duty born of your own nature, O Arjuna, you will carry out helplessly what through delusion you do not wish to do.*

If a person is bent upon swimming towards the West, when the current is flowing Eastwards, the current will surely drag him to the East. If the paddy seed were to say that it will not grow into a paddy plant, will it be. able to go against its own nature? In the same way, O wise Arjuna, as your innate nature belongs to the warrior's tradition, how can you say that you will not rise to fight? Even if you say so, your nature will compel you to stand up and fight. O Arjuna, your warrior's nature has bestowed upon you bravery, indomitable spirit, mindfulness and other qualities at the time of your birth. O Son of Pandu, this inborn nature will not allow you to sit quiet without performing your duties in conformity with the group of your inherent qualities (1286-1290). O Arjuna, since you are bound by these qualities appropriate for a warrior, you will not be able to go against your inborn nature. If, without taking into account your innate nature, you take it in your head not to fight, you will be forced to fight like a person who, placed in a chariot with hands and feet bound, travels far without walking. Did you not fight, when Uttara, the eldest son of Virata, began to flee from the battlefield? That warrior's nature, which made you fight then will compel you to fight now (1291-1295). You knocked down on the battlefield eleven divisions of warriors alone; that Kshatriya nature of yours will make you fight here too. O Arjuna, does a patient ever like illness or a poor man ever like poverty? Yet a powerful destiny makes them suffer these. The same destiny acting according to the will of God will not allow you to do otherwise. That God abides in your heart.

61. *The Lord abides, O Arjuna, in the hearts of all beings, spinning them round by his divine Power.*

The sun in the form of the Supreme Spirit, with his thousand rays, rises in the great sky in the form of hearts of all beings. He illumines the three states of wakefulness, the dream and deep sleep and inspires the wayfarers in the form of embodied Selves with false knowledge (1296-1300). He makes the lotuses in the form of sense-objects blossom in the lake of knowable objects and feeds them to the bees in the form of the beings with six feet consisting of the five senses and the mind. This metaphor apart, God abides in the hearts of all beings talking the form of egoism. He pulls the strings from behind the curtain of Maya and makes the puppets in the form of eighty-four lakhs of species dance. He invests all beings from god Brahma to the worm with body-forms according to their deserts. Whatever being is invested with a body appropriate to it, rides the body with the notion "I am the body". (1301-1305) Just as the thread should get entangled in the thread, or a blade of grass should bind another, or a child should try to catch hold of its reflection in water, so the Self adopts that body-form, though separate from him, with the notion of identity with it. In this way by mounting the beings on the mechanism of the body, God pulls the strings in accordance with their past actions. Then the being begins to move by virtue of the string which is exclusively

earmarked for him according to his past deeds. Just as the wind makes a blade of grass whirl round and round in the sky, so God moves it about between heaven and earth (1306-1310). Just as iron is set in motion by the magnet, so all the activities of beings take place under the authority of God. O Dhananjaya, just as in the proximity of the moon, the ocean and others start their activities vtz. the ocean gets into full tide, the moon-stone begins to ooze, the night lotuses bloom, and chakora birds give up their reserve, in the same way God goads the beings to act through the prakriti. The same God abides in your heart. O son of Pandu, the feeling which rises in your mind without allowing itself to be identified with Arjuna is the real aspect of God (1311-1315). Therefore. God will goad your prakriti, which will then compel you to fight. God is the Lord of all beings and the controller of prakriti It is, therefore, meet that you should make your sense organs to act freely in accordance with your nature. The decision whether you should fight or not fight should be left to the prakriti Please keep in mind that this prakriti is under the control of God who dwells in your heart.

62. *Take refuge in him alone with your whole heart, O descendent of Bharata. You will attain by his grace supreme peace and the eternal abode.*

Just as the Ganges surrenders itself to the sea, you should surrender yourself completely to God. Then through his grace, you will become the lord of the lady in the form of peace, and you will revel in the blissful experience of the Self (1316- 1320). You will then become the eternal Self, from which the creation starts, where rest becomes restful and experience gains experience. So said Shri Krishna, the Lord of the goddess of wealth to Partha.

63. *Thus have I taught you wisdom more secret than and other secret; fully ponder over it and do what you will.*

This famous sacred text known as Gita is the essence of Vedic literature and one gains the gem of Self by its means. That which is current as knowledge and by praising whose glory Vedanta became renowned in this world, of which all the intellectual subjects are a mere shadow, by which knowledge I that behold all am known (1321-1325) – that knowledge of Self is the secret treasure of mine, who am unmanifest. But how can I hide it from you? O Arjuna, because I am extremely fond of you, I am entrusting this secret treasure to you. Just as a mother, crazy because of her love for her child talks to it in a lively mood, will not my affection for you make Me talk like that? As though by straining the sky or stripping the nectar off its rind, or making the lamp go through an ordeal or putting collyrium in the eyes of the sun who illumines even the atoms in the nether world by his light (1326-1330), so after considering it from all angles, I, who am omniscient, have explained to you the true knowledge. Now think well for yourself and do what you think proper.

After hearing this talk of the Lord, Arjuna kept quiet. Seeing' this the Lord said, "O Arjuna, you are so straight that you are not deceitful. If a hungry person were to say, out of shyness, that he had enough, he will have to suffer from hunger and earn the fault of deception. In the same way if after meeting an all-knowing teacher one were to feel shy and not ask for enlightenment on the nature of Self (1331-1335), one would become liable to the sin of self-deception and miss a great opportunity. From your silence I gather that you wish me to summarise what I have said so far. To this Arjuna said, "O Lord, you have truly read my mind. But why should I say this? Is there anyone else who knows all like you? This whole world is the object of knowledge, you alone are the knower. Is there any point in praising the sun by calling him the sun?" Hearing this Lord Krishna said, "Why do you feel that what you have said about Me is insufficient praise (1336-1340)?"

64. *Listen further to My supreme word, the most secret of all. You are exceedingly dear to Me. So I shall speak for your benefit.*

Now listen once again to my clear talk with spacious attention. It is not that I shall speak because it is worth communicating or that you should hear because it is worth hearing. In fact fortune has favoured you in the form of My talk. O Dhananjaya, the young of a tortoise is fed by the mere glance of its mother; and the sky pours rain for the chataka birds. In the same way, it is like securing the fruit without undertaking any activity. Is there anything in this world which man cannot secure when fortune smiles upon him? This is the esoteric knowledge in which one gets rid of dualism and enjoys the bliss of unity in his very home (1341-1345). O dearest, that which is the object of our informal affection is nothing else but the Self. When we cleanse the mirror, it is not for its sake but for our own sake as we wish to look into it. In that way, O Arjuna, I am speaking for my own sake, making you an excuse. Now is there any duality between us? So I am telling you the secret of my heart. I am crazy about My single-minded devotees. The salt being enamoured of water surrenders itself completely to it and feels no shame in merging with it (1346-1350). In the same way, you do not keep back anything from Me and so why should I hide anything from you? Now listen to my great secret before which all other secrets reveal themselves.

65. *Fix your mind on Me and be devoted to Me. worship Me and bow down before Me (then) you shall come to Me alone, I promise, as you are dear to Me.*

Please make Me, the all-pervading God, the object of all your activities, both physical and mental. Just as the wind remains clinging closely to the sky, you remain centred in Me while doing your work. Nay, you make your mind my exclusive dwelling-place and fill your ears with My praise (1351-

1355). The saints who are purified by the knowledge of Self are My aspects. Look at these saints as fondly as an amorous husband looks at his beautiful wife. I am the dwelling-place of all things; so make your speech fond of uttering My name. Whatever you do or wherever you go, you perform all such actions for My sake. When you render help to your kinsmen or strangers, that will constitute My worship and your will become worshipper of Me. How many things should I tell you one after another? You should assume the attitude of a servant and, seeing Me in all beings, serve them (1356-1360). Then you will get rid of hatred for all being and bow to them with the knowledge that I am in all of them. In this way you will secure full refuge in Me. And then there being no third party in this crowded world, we shall have complete privacy. Then we shall be able to enjoy each other's company which will enhance our happiness. When the barrier of a third party is removed, you will come to Me and become one with Me. When the water dries up, is there any obstacle in the way of the reflection of the sun merging with its original (1361-1365)? Who is going to prevent the wind from merging with the sky or the wave from getting dissolved into the sea? Whatever distinction is seen between you and Me is due to the properties of our bodies. When the body-consciousness disappears, you will become one with Me. Do not entertain any doubt about what I say. I swear by you that I am not saying anything which is untrue. But to swear by you amounts to swearing by My own Self, but real love makes one forget shyness. Otherwise why should I stoop down to swearing, when I am the knowable indifferent to the world. because of whom this world appearance seems reeal, and whose command conquers even the Destroyer (1366-1370), whose will comes to pass and who take care of the welfare of the world like a father? As I have become crazy out of fondness for you, I have given up the insignia of my Godhead and become imperfect, while you, who have become one with me, have become perfect. This is, O Dhananjaya, like a king, who swears by himself to achieve his own ends.

Then Arjuna said, "Please do not indulge in such unseemly talk. All our objects are achieved by the remembrance of your name alone. Even so, you give advice to me and while doing this you resort to swearing. Is there any limit to your jesting (1371-1375)? The sun with his rays makes a garden of lotus flowers bloom and under that pretext gives light to the whole world. The cloud sends showers of rain sufficient to flood the sea in order to cool down the heated earth, but for that the chataka bird provides the pretext. So, O gracious donor, I have merely become the instrument for your generosity." Then the Lord replied, "Stop; you need not say all this. By adopting the means I have taught you, you will truly attain to Me. When the salt becomes dissolved the moment it is dropped in water, then is there any reason for it to remain separate (1376-1380)? When a person worships Me with true devotion and realises that I pervade all things, then he drops his egoistic feeling and become Myself. So I have explained to

you the method by which one acquires knowledge through actions and ultimately attains to Me. O son of Pandu, first he should propitiate Me by dedicating all ' actions to Me. Then he will attain to my knowledge through my grace and become merged in my divine form. What I am saying is thrice true. Then in that person the end to be achieved and the means to achieve it get dissolved and nothing remains for him to do (1381-1385). By dedicating always your actions to Me you have won my grace. On the strength of this grace you will. overcome all the obstacles in this war; I have become so fond of you. I have explained to you. with reasoning as well as illustrations in the form of the Gita, that knowledge dispels ignorance along with worldly existence and sees Me alone present everywhere. On the strength of this knowledge disclosed to you in various ways, get rid of your ignorance which gives rise to righteous and unrighteous actions.

66. *Abandoning all duties take refuge in Me alone. Grieve not; I shall release you from all sins.*

From hope springs misery, from slander sin and from misfortune poverty (1386-1390). In the same way because of ignorance religious and irreligious acts leading to heaven and hell have come into being. Unroot this ignorance with the help of knowledge. If you take the rope in your hand, the delusion that it is a serpent disappears. After rising from sleep the mundane affairs along with the household seen in the dream vanish. When the jaundice is cured, the moon does not look yellow, or when the fever subides, the tongue loses its bitter taste. When the sun sets, the mirage disappears or when one discards firewood the fire is snuffed out. In the same way you should give up ignorance, which gives rise to the fad of religious and unreligious acts and then relinquish even meritorious acts (i.e. perform them without desire for their fruit) (1391-1395). When ignorance ceases, I alone remain. Just as when the dream disapears along with the sleep, one remains alone; so there remains none except Myself. Then he becomes one with Me with the knowledge that he is Myself.

To become one with Me with the loss of one's distinct personality is what is known as surrender to Me. Just as with the destruction of the earthen pot, the space within it becomes merged in akasha, so when you surrender yourself to Me, you will become united to Me. Just as a gold bead merges into gold or the wave dissolves in the water, you surrender yourself to Me and attain perfect unity with Me (1396-1400). The marine-fire surrenders itself to the sea, but burns it. So give up the idea of surrendering to Me and still retaining your separate individuality. How is it possible for anyone to surrender to Me and still retain individual existence distinct from Me? Fie upon such talk. How does one not feel ashamed to talk like this? O Dhananjaya, even a rustic maid who succeeds in winning

the love of a prince, is raised to his status. Do not lend your ears to the abominable talk that when a person attains to Me, who am the Lord of the universe, his knots do not get snapped. When a seeker identifies himself with Me and renders service to Me, it constitutes devotion to me. Then act in such a way that you will attain knowledge through devotion (1401-1405). Just as butter, obtained from churning buttermilk, does not mix with it, so when you surrender to Me with the knowledge of unity with Me, then you will not be affected with religious or irreligious acts. When iron gets rusted, it is reduced to dust; but once it comes into contact with the philosopher's stone, it is transformed into gold and does not get rusted again. When Are is kindled by rubbing sticks against each other, it no longer remains confined in them. O Arjuna, the sun cannot see darkness or a person after waking up is not deluded by his dream (1406-1410). In the same way, when one becomes completely identified with Me, is there any scope for his remaining distinct from my universal form? You should not feel anxious about it or about merit and sin. To remain separate from Me is the sign of bondage. That sin will be destroyed by My knowledge. So when you surrender to Me with exclusive devotion, you will become one with Me. As salt fallen into water becomes water, O Dhananjaya, you will thus be released from all bondage. When you attain knowledge of Me, I shall deliver you (1411-1415). So, O talented Arjuna, you realise Me through knowledge and surrender yourself to Me. So said the omniform, omniscient and omnipresent Lord Krishna.

Then Lord Krishna of light complexion extended his right arm adorned with a bracelet and embraced Arjuna, the prince among devotees, who had surrendered himself to Him. The embrace was only a pretext to bestow on Arjuna that secret which is not within the reach of words, which have to beat a retreat along with the intellect before it (1416-1420). By mingling His heart with the heart of Arjuna, the Lord transferred the secret within His heart into the heart of Arjuna, and became united with him without the loss of duality. Like a lamp lighting another lamp, Lord Krishna made Arjuna one with Him by this embrace without breaking up dualism. Then there swept such a great flood of happiness that even the all-pervading Lord got drowned in it. When a sea meets another sea doubling its water, it rises high in the sky to accommodate itself; so when the two met, they could not control themselves. Who could know and tell how it happened? The whole universe was chockfull with Narayana (Krishna) (1421-1425).

In this way the Lord disclosed the sacred text of the Gita, which contains the quintessence of the Vedas and which everyone is qualified to study. Now you may ask how I came to know that the Gita contains the original thread of the Vedas. I will explain to you clearly the theory underlying it, which is well-known. The same Lord, whose breath gave birth to the Vedas, who is true to his word, narrated this Gita through his own mouth. It is, therefore, proper to say that the Gita has its origin in the Vedas.

There is another reason for this; that whose essential form does not get destroyed but in which its potential growth lies stored up is called its seed. (1426-1430) Just as the tree is stored up in the seed, so the Vedas with its three divisions are stored up in the Gita. I, therefore, think that Vedas are contained in a seed-form in the Gita and this is also patent. Just as a body is adorned by jewellery, so the three divisions of the Vedas appear distinctly in the Gita.

I shall now disclose to you where these three dimensions of the Vedas viz. ritualism, spiritual practices and knowledge occur. Chapter I tells us how this Gita came to be taught. The Chapter II affirms the existence of the Self (1431-1435) and says that the philosophy of the Gita is based on the knowledge of the Self which is essential for securing salvation. Then in Chapter III, it proceeds to teach the method of attaining deliverance for the persons who are bound by ignorance. Here we are told that those who are bound by body-consciousness, should give up motivated and prohibited actions and perform assiduously the actions prescribed by the scriptures. So the Lord concludes the third chapter by the statement that the prescribed actions should be performed in good faith. This is how the first three chapters contain the karmakanda of the Vedas. When a doubt arose as to how this performance of obligatory functions, would release one from the bonds of ignorance (1436-1440), Lord Krishna explains that when the bound person reaches the stage of a seeker, he should dedicate all his actions to the Supreme Brahman. He told Arjuna that whatever prescribed actions he performs through the agency of body, speech and mind, he should perform them in dedication to God. He proceeds to explain at the end of Chapter IV that this Yoga of action should end up in the worship and praise of God. The same theme has been continued till the end of Chapter XI, in which it is stated that the Lord should be worshipped ' through work. In these eight chapters, he has described the upasanakanda i.e. the division relating to spiritual discipline, in which the Gita explains how one should avoid the obstacles in one's path (1441-1445). The true and compassionate knowledge which springs through the grace of God and from following the sect of the Guru, has been described at great length from the verse 'He who is non-hostile to all creatures' in Chapter XII to the verse 'Absence of pride' in Chapter XIII, and so I have included Chapter XII in jnanakanda i.e. the division of Vedas dealing with knowledge. The theme of the four chapters beginning with the Chapter XII to the end of Chapter XV contain the jnanakanda, dealing with knowledge. In this way the Gita, which is a beautiful digest consisting of three divisions, is telling all in a thundering voice that they should partake of this fruit in the from of liberation. In Chapter XVI, it expounds the nature of ignorance which is inimical to the means of knowledge. Chapter XVII states that this enemy of knowledge must be conquered with the aid of scriptures. In this way, from Chapter I to the end of Chapter XVII the Lord has explained the gist of Vedas, which were born from His very breath.

The eighteenth is the crowning chapter, which contains the pith of the discourses in the previous chapters (1451-1455).

In this way, this discourse known as the Bhagawadgita, enshrined in seven hundred verses, constitutes the Vedas incarnate, but is superior to it on the point of generosity. The Vedas are a veritable treasure of knowledge, but none are so niggardly in imparting it. They whisper knowledge into the ears of the first three castes (vlz. the brahmins, the Kshatriyas and the vaishyas). They are sitting tight without giving elbow room (in the temple of knowledge) to the women, shudras etc. who are equally affected by worldly misery. (Jnanadeva says) so it seems to me that to make up for this deficiency and to make this knowledge available to all, the Vedas have assumed the form of the Gita. More than the Vedas, this Gita enters into their minds in the form of its meaning, into the ears through hearing and into the mouths through reciting (1456-1460). Whoever recites it everyday or spends his time in the company of those who recite it or copies it and distributes it in a book form, opens a free eating place providing the food of liberation in the market-place of worldly affairs. Just as the sky provides open space for all to dwell in the Armament, to stay an the earth or to roam in the sunlight, so the Gita welcomes all without discriminating between the best and the lowest and bestows upon them the bliss and peace of liberation. Thus the Vedas, afraid of being called miserly, entered the womb of the Gita and got dazzling fame (1461-1465). Lord Krishna taught the Vedas in the form of Gita so that all can grasp them with ease. Just as the entire household gets the supply of milk, which the cow releases for the sake of its calf, so the entire world becomes eligible for salvation through Arjuna. The cloud sends rain out of kindness to the chataka bird, but the world gets satisfaction from it. The sun rises every morning to make the helpless lotus blossom, but the eyes of all people become gratified by its light. Thus on the plea of Arjuna Lord Krishna revealed the Gita to the world and lightened the heavy burden of its existence (1466-1470). He is thus not only the Lord of Lakshmi, but he is the veritable sun who has illumined the three worlds by the brilliance of the gem in the form of Gita-text. Holy is that dynasty which gave birth to Arjuna, who became eligible for this knowledge and made its enclosure free for all.

Then Lord Krishna, the worthy preceptor; saw that Arjuna had become dissolved in his Self and restored the sense of duality in him. The Lord asked Arjuna, "Are you now convinced by what I have told you in the form of Gita?" Then Arjuna said, "O Lord, I am convinced by your grace." Then the Lord said further, "O winner of wealth, one secures the good treasure through good fortune, but rarely one is able to enjoy it (1471-1475). O Arjuna, see what hard toil the gods and demons must have undertaken to churn the uncoagulated milk in the big pot of the milky ocean. That toil bore fruit and brought them nectar. But they could not take proper care of

it and what was supposed to bring immortality became fatal to the demons. Such is the tragic result of acquiring affluence without the knowledge of how to enjoy it. Do you not know that King Nahusha became the Lord of the heaven by performing sacrifices but was transformed into a snake by his lax conduct? Since you had earned abundant merit, you became eligible to hear this Gita, the best of all scriptures (1476-1480). You should, therefore, try to understand the tradition of this scripture and follow it according to the rules of that tradition. If you perform your religious duties without understanding that tradition, then you will secure the result like the churning of the milky sea. O Arjuna, even if you have got a good cow, you will get milk only if you know how to milk her. So even if a seeker secures a worthy preceptor and attains knowledge through his grace, that knowledge will be fruitful only if he observes the tradition of that knowledge. So I shall tell you now the proper tradition of this Gita scripture; hear it with due respect (1481- 1485).

67. *Never is this to be told by you to a non-ascetic nor to one who is not a devotee, nor to one who does not wish to hear it, nor to one who cavils at Me.*

O Partha, you should not impart this knowledge of the Gita which you have secured with great devotion to one who is devoid of austerity. Even if he is an ascetic but is lacking in devotion to his preceptor, you should shun him, as the Vedas have ostracized the members of the low-caste. Sacrificial food which is left over should not be given to a crow even if he is old. So the teaching of the Gita should not be imparted to one who is austere but is not devoted to his Guru. Even if a person is perfect in these two respects, but is not earnest about hearing it, he will be entitled to respect among men but will not be eligible to hear it (1486-1490). Even if the pearls are precious, but have no holes in them, will you be able to thread them? Who can deny that the sea is deep, but does not the rain falling on it go waste? Why not offer sweet dishes to a hungry person rather than waste it on a person whose belly is already full? Take care not to impart, even out of curiosity, this teaching of the Gita to a person, however worthy, if he Has no liking for it. The ' eye can appreciate beauty, yet what is the use of placing sweet scent before it? A thing becomes fruitful only when it is received with a liking. (1491-1495) O husband of Subhadra, even if a person practices austerity and has devotion, avoid him if he has no liking for hearing the Gita. Even if a person possesses all these three things, namely austerity, devotion and liking for hearing Gita, but talks disparagingly of Me, who am the author of this Gita arid the controller of the universe or reviles Me and my devotees, he is not fit to hear this teaching. Even if he is equipped with other qualities, it is like a lampstand without a flame (1496-1500). Just as a beautiful maiden is decked with ornaments but has no life in her, or a beautiful mansion is guarded by a female cobra at its entrance, or delicious dishes are mixed

with venom, or there is deception under cover of friendship, so the austerity, devotion and understanding of a person who reviles me and my devotee is full of deceit. Therefore, O Dhananjaya, do not allow such a person to have anything to do with this scripture. (1501-1505) Were such a reviler as great as god Brahma, do not impart this teaching to him even out of fun. O archer, whoever has, after laying the foundation of stones in the form of austerity, has built a temple in the form of devotion to his preceptor, and after building a beautiful dome of gems in the form of non-slander, keeps open the front gate in the form of keen desire to hear the Gita.

68. *He who will tell my devotees this Supreme secret, after showing the highest devotion to Me, shall without doubt come to Me alone.*

and installs the divine Gita-gem in the shrine of his heart, he becomes one with Me and attains equality with Me. The pranava was shut up in the form of Om in the womb formed by the syllabic sounds of a, u and m. (1506-1510) It is as though that seed of the Vedas sprouted and spread in the form of the Gita or the Gayatri formula bore flowers and fruits in the form of the Gita verses. Whoever tells my devotees the secret contained in the Gita verses and brings the devotee and the Gita together in the same way as one brings together a mother with its infant which has no other source of living except the mother's milk, he becomes one with Me after the fall of his body.

69. *Nor is there anyone among men who renders dearer service to Me than he. There will be none other than he, who is made beloved by Me on earth.*

I am extremely fond of such a narrator of the Gita even though he is adorned with a body and remains separate from Me. He is dearer to Me than a man of knowledge, a person engrossed in ritual works or an ascetic. O Son of Pandu, there is none on this earth who is dearer to Me than one who narrates the Gita in a concourse of my devotees. He who, fixing his mind upon Me through a longing for Me, and gives lessons in the Gita, becomes an ornament in the assemblage of saints. I feel as if the spring has come in the form of this narrator of the Gita in the garden in the form of devotees. Just as in the spring season the trees in the garden get new foliage, the hairs on the bodies of the hearers stand on their end. Like the trees which move in the soft breeze, the hearers sway to and fro with great joy. Just as the flowers are covered with dew in the garden, their lotus-like eyes become moist with joyous tears. Just as the cuckoos sing in a sweet voice in the garden, so the hearers sing my name loudly in a faltering tone. Just as the moon after rising fulfills the object of life of the chakora birds or the cloud answers the call of the peacocks and presents itself before them (1516-1520), so my devotee, in communion with Me,

scatters in profusion the gems in the form of the Gita-verses in the assembly of saints. If I look around, I have not met such a worthy devotee in the past nor am I likely to meet one in future. In this way, he gives a feast of the teachings of the Gita to the saints. To such a devotee I give a place in My heart.

70. *And whoever will study this sacred conversation between us, by him shall I be worshipped through knowledge-sacrifice; this is My view.*

This dialogue which has taken place between yourself and Myself has descended on this earth to win liberation. He who recites repeatedly this conversation between yourself and Myself, (1521-1525) which illumines the Truth in its entirety without analysing the words or the stanzas, kindles the sacrificial Are of knowledge, and by giving therein, O wise Arjuna, the oblation in the form of knowledge, propitiates Me, the Supreme Self. Whatever capacity the wise acquire through study and experience of the Gita, is also attained by the devotees by singing and narrating the Gita. Thus one who recites the Gita secures the same fruit as is attained by one who knows its meaning. For Mother Gita does not make any distinction between a knowing child and a babe.

71. *And the man who might merely hear this with faith and without cavilling, he too shall be freed from evil and attain the blessed worlds of righteous men.*

No sooner a person full of faith in the recital of the Gita hears it with piety, and without cavilling; than the sins flee away from him (l526-1530). When the forest is burning in a conflagration, the animals and birds therein run helter-skelter, or with the rise of the sun on the horizon, the darkness in the sky is dispelled. In the same way when the recital of the Gita enters the ears of a person, all his sins accumulated since the beginning of the world get destroyed. In this way his family-tree becomes purified and holy and it bears beautiful fruits. One acquires the merit of as many house-sacrifices as the letters of the Gita which enter the heart through the ears (1531-1535). So one who hears the Gita gets rid of his sins, increases his merit and ultimately attains the kingdom of God. In his journey towards Me, he makes his first halt in the heaven, and after enjoying the celestial pleasures to his heart's content, he ultimately joins me. In this way, O Dhananjaya, I give to the reciter and also the hearer of the Gita the fruit in the form of bliss. Now I wish to ask you about your problem, for the solution of which I had to narrate this Gita to you,

72. *Have you listened to this, O Partha, with one-pointed mind? Has your delusion due to ignorance been destroyed, O winner of wealth?*

Tell me, O Arjuna, have you imbibed all the doctrines of the Gita? (1536-1540) Whatever knowledge I poured into your ears, has it sunk in your mind? Or has some of it got scattered in the way or been ignored by you through disrespect? If whatever I have told you has entered your heart, then give a straight and ready answer to my question. Have you now got rid of the infatuation, which arose in your mind due to ignorance? Do you still think that you will undertake some action or abstain from it at your sweet will (1541-1545)? The Lord asked Arjuna this question in order to prevent him from being dissolved in the bliss of Brahman and brought him back to the sense of distinctness. The Lord thought that if Arjuna became attuned to Brahman, he would not fulfill the object which he has in view and so he did not allow him to transgress the boundary of his separate personality. Otherwise did he not, the omniscient one, know his own doing? But by asking him this question, the Lord restored his consciousness of the body and made him confirm whether he had attained perfection or not. Then just as the moon, rising from the milky sea, illumines the sky remaining therein without separating from the sea (1546-1550), Arjuna had reached the frontier in which on the one hand he was getting forgetful of his Brahmic state but on the other was seeing Brahman all around him, in which on the one side the world was fast vanishing, while on the other his Brahmic state was abating. Then he became forgetful of his Brahmic state and came back to the consciousness of his body in the form 'I am Arjuna'. Then with trembling hands he soothed the horripilation on his body and wiped the sweat dry. Then he supported his body, which was swaying on account of his heightened breathing and after steadying the movement of his body, he held back the joyful tears trickling down' his eyes (1551-1560). Then he suppressed the emotions crowding in his heart, which produced a choking sensation in his throat and further recovering his faltering speech, he steadied his breath.

Arjuna said:

73. *My delusion is gone; I have now recollection (of my duty) through your grace, O Achyuta (Krishna). I stand secure with no doubts and shall do what you say.*

Then Arjuna said, "O Lord, why do you ask whether I still have that delusion? It has already left with bag and baggage. Will it be reasonable for the sun to approach and ask, "Do you see darkness?" In the same way, is not your very sight sufficient to dispel this delusion (1556-1560)? You have explained to me in detail the knowledge with affection greater than that of a mother. Now if you ask me whether I have got rid of my infatuation, I readily tell you that through your grace I have accomplished my object. I had got entangled in the notion that 'I am Arjuna', but after becoming one with you, I have become free from it. Through your favour I have come to realise the Self and got rid of my infatuation. It was through

the notion of duality that I was bothered by the question, whether I should do it (i.e. fight) or not do it. Now I know nothing in this world except Yourself (1561-1565). I do not feel even a shadow of doubt about it. I have now reached that state in which nothing remains for me to do. I have realised my essential nature through You and there remains nothing for me to do except do Your bidding. You are my preceptor, my God, the sight of whom obliterates the visible universe, who, although dual, removes all duality, who although single pervades everything, whose very contact snaps all bonds, who when longed for destroys all longings, who, when met with, brings about one's meeting with one's own Self, who keeps company in solitude and leads one beyond the knowledge of non-duality (1566-1570). If after becoming Brahman and relinquishing all actions good or bad, I wish to serve You faithfully, You give the devotee a share of Your divinity just as when the river Ganges goes to serve the ocean, it itself becomes the ocean. You are my worthy preceptor fit for worship without any formality, who has laid me under a deep obligation by granting me the vision of Brahman. You have removed the screen of distinctness which existed between You and me and You bestowed upon me the sweet joy of serving You. O God of gods, I shall do whatever You command me to do (1571-1575)".

Hearing these words of Arjuna the Lord danced madly with joy and said to himself. "I have secured in Arjuna the best of all the fruits in the world." Does not the milky sea forget its limits and overflow after, seeing its son, the full moon, complete in all its phases? Sanjaya was transported with joy seeing the union of Arjuna with Lord Krishna on the altar in the form of dialogue. Overflowing with that joy, Sanjaya said to Dhritarashtra, "O what luck! The merciful Vyasa has protected us in this war. You are now blessed with the vision of knowledge, although you lack the physical sight to deal with worldly affairs (1576-1580). I, whose profession is to yoke the horse to the chariot and drive it, got this opportunity to hear the conversation between Krishna and Arjuna. On this dreadful occasion of a war, whichever party is defeated, it will be our loss. But even under this difficult situation, the favour of sage Vyasa has made it possible for us to enjoy openly this bliss of Brahman." Sanjaya said this, but Dhritarashtra sat quiet. Just as the rock does not ooze under moonlight, so the speech of Sanjaya had no effect on the heart of Dhritarashtra. Seeing this condition of his, Sanjaya came to know that his talk did not appeal to the king. But mad with great happiness, he began to speak again (1581-1585) in ecstasy of joy, but then he knew that the king was not worthy of hearing it.

Sanjaya said:

74. *Thus did I hear this dialogue, marvellous and thrilling, between Vasudeva (Krishna) and the high-minded Partha.*

Sanjaya said: O King, Lord Krishna was overjoyed to hear what Arjuna said. The eastern and the western seas bear different names, but their water is the same. In the same way, Lord Krishna and Arjuna are distinct with separate bodies, but this distinction disappeared in their conversation. If two objects, brighter than a mirror, are placed face to face they see their respective forms in each other (1586-1590). In the same way, Arjuna saw in the Lord himself as well as Shri Krishna. Simultaneously Shri Krishna saw himself as well as Arjuna in Partha. When the Lord was thinking of his devotee, he saw the form of the devotee in his own form. Since all distinction between the two disappeared, they became identified with each other. Since the distinction between the two vanished, how can there be any questioning between the two and how can there be any pleasure from their conversation? When they were conversing with each other in the plane of duality, I heard that conversation which ended with the loss of their distinction (1591-1596). If two mirrors are placed before each other, how can we say which saw which? Or if two lamps are kept one in front of the other, who can say which borrowed whose light? If another sun rises in the sky, who can say which one gives light and which one is lit? When we think about it, all thought comes to a standstill; both of them had become so engrossed in the conversation. If salt is placed between two currents of water to keep them separate, the salt too becomes water in no time (1596-1600). I was also reduced to the same state when I was thinking of the conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna.

As Sanjaya was talking like this, he was so overcome by the sattvic emotions that he lost consciousness of being Sanjaya. He began to have horipilation on his body, his limbs had wrinkles, his body became still and was covered with sweat and tremour. He enjoyed the bliss of the non-dual state and his eyes shed copious tears of joy – nay, they were not tears, but the overflow of his heart. He could not contain this joy within his heart, his throat became choked, his speech became stifled through suffocation (1601-1605). In short, these eight sattvic emotions made Sanjaya speechless and he became, as it were, the meeting-place of bliss arising from their conversation. That bliss was of such a nature that it clamed his mind and made him conscious of himself.

75. *Through the favour of Vyasa I heard this secret and supreme yoga from Krishna, the Lord of yoga, who proclaimed it himself in person.*

When his joy subsided, he said, I have hard through the favour of Vyasa the secret which even the upanishads do not know. After hearing it, I was enveloped by the Brahmic state, and the world with it's distinctions of 'I-Ness' and 'You-Ness' disappeared. I could hear, through the favour of sage' Vyasa, the words of Lord Krishna, in whom all the paths of yoga became merged (l606- 1610). The Lord spoke only to hirnself by assuming the form of Arjuna. How can I describe the marvellous power of

my preceptor (Vyasa), because of whom my ears became qualified to hear this talk?

76. *As I recall again and again, O King, this marvellous and sacred dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, I rejoice over and over again.*

When Sanjaya was talking like this to Dhritarashtra, he became wonderstruck and lost his consciousness. Just as a jewel glitters one moment and stops flashing in the next moment or the lakes in the Himalayas freeze and become like sheets of crystal with moon-rise and melt again with the rising of the sun, so when Sanjaya regained consciousness, he used to recollect the conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna and wondering would again lose his consciousness. This state repeated itself off and on (1611-1615).

77. *As I recall to mind from time to time that most marvellous form of Hari (Krishna), great is my amazement, O King; I go into raptures again and again.*

Then he stood up and said to the King: O King, how did you remain unmoved even after seeing the universal form of Lord Hari? How can you miss that which is seen without being perceptible, which looks like non-existent but is existence, which enters into your memory even though you forget it? There is no scope left even to be amazed about it; it is such a great flood of ecstatic joy which is carrying me away. I thus took a bath in the holy confluence of the dialogue between? Lord Krishna and Arjuna and got rid of my egoism. In a rapturous state, he used to mutter a few strange words and with a choked throat he was repeating 'Krishna', 'Krishna' now and then. (1616-1620) But King Dhritarashtra was totally unaware of this state of Sanjaya and was making different plans in his mind. Then Sanjaya absorbed within himself the ecstatic joy which he was experiencing and pacified his sattvic feelings. Instead of asking questions suitable for the occasion, King Dhritarashtra said to Sanjaya, "O Sanjaya, where are your manners? With what object did Vyasa post you here? What kind of irrelevant talk are you indulging in?" If you place a rustic person in a palace, he feels lost there. Just as with the daybreak a thief feels it as ht-time, (1621-1625), so one who could not appreciate the importance of something; he naturally felt to be wrong. It was, therefore, natural that what Sanjaya was saying seemed improper to Dhritarashtra. Then the King said, "Tell me what is going on. Who will be victorious to this war? I guess that the valour of Duryodhana is more than that of others and his army also is one and a half times greater as compared with the army of Pandavas. So I feel that his victory 1s certain. I do not know what your prediction is. But do tell me whatever it may be." (1626-1630)

78. *Wherever there is Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, and wherever there is Partha, the archer, there is assured fortune as also victory, prosperity and statesmanship; such is my considered view.*

Hearing these words of the King, Sanjaya said: I do not know which of the two parties will be victorious. But it is clear that wherever there is longevity, there is life, where there is the moon, there is moonlight; where there is Lord Shiva, there is Parwati and where there are saints, there is discrimination. Where there is the king, there is the army; where there is warm feeling, there is good relationship; where there is fire, there is the burning power; where there is kindness, there is righteousness, where there is righteousness, there is happiness; and where there is happiness, there must be the Supreme Person. Where there is the spring season, there must be flowers; and where there are flowers; there must be swarms of black bees (1631-1635). Further where there is a preceptor, there must be knowledge; where there is knowledge, there must be Self-realisation; and with the realisation of Self, there must be self-satisfaction. Luxurious living goes with good fortune, high spirits go with happiness and light with the sun. Where there is Lord Krishna in whom the four aims of human life have found a protector, there is goddess Lakshmi, and where there is this Mother of the universe along with her Lord, how could there not be her maids, the eight marvellous powers (siddhi) such as the power to be as small as an atom? Lord Krishna is himself victory incarnate, and so victory will run posthaste to that party which is favoured by Him (1636-1640). Arjuna is also well-known by the name Vijaya (victory) and Lord Krishna is victory personified and so wealth and victory will certainly go to them. Since Lord Krishna and Lakshmi are his parents, will not the trees in his country compete with Kalpataru trees? Will not the ordinary stones in his country become the philosophers' stones or will not the land there be of gold? Is it any wonder that the rivers of such a place should flow with nectar? O King, think for yourself. Why should we not call his mere utterances as the words of the Vedas and take him to be the existence-consciousness-bliss in human form? (1641-1645.)

O king, both heaven and liberation will be subservient to him, who has Lord Krishna and goddess Lakshmi as his parents. So all miraculous powers will favour willingly that party which is backed by them. I know this much and nothing more. The cloud is more beneficial than its progenitor, the sea. Similar is the case of Arjuna. The philosopher's stone (the preceptor) transforms iron (the disciple) into gold, but all the transactions of the world are carried on the basis of gold. Because of this one need not attribute an inferior status to the preceptor. Fire transforms itself into a lamp and gives light (1646-1650). In the same way, through the power of God, Arjuna became better than God and so to praise him enhances the glory of God. Every father wishes that his son should surpass him in all qualities and that very desire bore fruit in the case of Lord Krishna – Nay, O King, that party which has on its side Partha, who has received the favour of Lord Krishna is bound to win victory in this war. Why should you have any doubt about it? If that party would not win this war, then victory itself would be meaningless.

So wherever there is goddess of wealth, her Lord and Partha, the son of Pandu, there is bound to be victory and prosperity. (1651-1655) If you have faith in the truthful utterance of sage Vyasa, then what I am saying is inevitable. Where there is the lord of Goddess Lakshmi and Arjuna the master devotee, there abides happiness as also gain of all that is auspicious. Should- this speech of mine prove to be untrue, then I shall forego my claim to be "disciple of sage Vyasa, so proclaimed Sanjaya, raising his arms.

In this way, Sanjaya brought the gist of the whole Bharata in one verse and delivered it into the hands of Dhritarashtra, the King of Kurus. Even though fire has unlimited power to burn, it is utilised to kindle the end of a cotton wick to dispel the darkness caused by sunset (1656-1660). In the same way, although the Vedic knowledge is infinite; it is contained in one lakh and twenty-five thousand verses of the Mahabharata, and the quientessane of the Mahabharata is contained in the seven hundred verses of the Gita. The last verse in this Gita is the final utterance of Sanjaya, the disciple of Vyasa. Whoever holds fast to this verse in his heart will ' have conquered ignorance, root and branch. These seven hundred verses are the foot-steps of the Gita or they are, as it were, the showers of nectar which have come down from the sky. I rather feel that that these verses are the pillars of the court of the king in the form of Self. (1661-1665) This Gita is like the blessed goddess propounded in the seven hundred mantras, who has become elated after killing the buffalo (Mahisha) demon in the form of infatuation. Therefore he who renders it devoted service through body, speech and mind will become the sovereign in the kingdom of bliss. Lord Krishna has revealed the Gita in seven hundred verses, which have surpassed the sun's rays in dispelling darkness. These Gita verses are like grape-vines forming a bower to provide a resting-place for those who suffer fatigue in the journey of worldly life or they are like the lotuses in bloom in a dark lake and saints are like bees which enjoy their honey (1666-1670). In short, these are not verses, but are so many bards who sing the glory of the Gita. This Gita is like a beautiful city which is enclosed in a wall in the form of seven hundred verses, within which all the shastras have come to dwell. These are not verses, but the outstretched arms of the Gita, with which she has come to embrace her Lord, the Supreme Self. These verses are like the bees on the Gita-flower, the waves on the Gita sea, or the horses of Shri Hari yoked to the Gita-chariot. It is as though all the holy waters have come together to join the Ganga in the form of the Gita on the entry of the sun in the form of Arjuna in the zodiacal sign Leo (1671-1675). This is not a row of verses but a row of philosophers' stones which bestow peace of mind or a row of wish-yielding trees which lead to the attainment of formless Brahman.

So every one of these seven hundred verses is excellent. So how could anyone take out some of them for special mention and praise? We cannot talk of the wish-yielding cow as a milch-cow or as a dry cow. How can one talk about 'the front or the rear of a lamp', or 'small or big' in the case of the sun or 'deep or shallow' in the case of the sea? In the same way one cannot talk of Gita verses as at the beginning or at the end. Who can distinguish between the fresh and

stale flowers of the coral (*Parijataka*) tree? (1676-1680) How much more then is my statement justified that these verses are equally important, none being greater or lesser than others?

As regards this Gita scripture, there is no distinction between one who narrates it and one who hears it. Everyone knows that in this Gita Lord Krishna is the one who narrates it and he it is who hears it in the form of Arjuna. Whatever merit one has got by knowing the import of the Gita is also secured by its recital. This scripture attaches the same importance to the meaning as well as the words which give expression to it. Therefore, there is no topic left for me to prove or establish. Know that this Gita is the literary image of Lord Krishna. Usually a religious text becomes fruitful in explaining its import, and when it has achieved this purpose, it loses its raison d'etre. But this Gita scripture is not like that; it is verily of the nature of the Supreme Self. (1681-1685) Out of compassion for the whole world, the blessed Lord brought the bliss of Brahman within the reach of everyone under the pretext of teaching Arjuna. The full moon cools down the affliction of the three worlds by making the chakora bird an excuse. Lord Shiva brought the sacred Ganga (Godawari) to the earth by making sage Gautama an excuse, in order to cool down the fever of people caused by the advent of the Kali age. In the same way, the Lord milked the cow in the form of Gita using Partha as the calf and made the milk in the form of the Self-knowledge available to the whole world. If you become engrossed in the Gita, heart and soul and thoroughly wet your tongue by means of its recital you will become one with the Gita. A recital of even one quarter of a verse (1686-1690) will make you rich in Brahmic knowledge, in the same way as contact of the philosopher's stone with even one part of a piece of iron turns it into gold. You will attain the same state if you hear it by turning your side and pulling a long face. Just as an affluent and generous donor does not send anyone with an empty hand, this Gita gives nothing short of liberation to one who hears it or recites it or grasps its meaning. Therefore, a wise person should only take recourse to the Gita. What will he gain by resorting to other religious texts (1691-1695)?

Sage Vyasa made it easy for others to grasp the meaning of the private conversation which took place between Shri Krishna and Arjuna. If a fond mother sits down to feed its child, it serves him food in small morsels or a clever fellow makes a fan in order to utilise the wind. In the same way, through the medium of the Anushtubh metre, it has been made easy for the women, shudras etc. to grasp the knowledge of the Self, which it is difficult to express in words. If the pearls had not been formed by the raindrops falling into the shells under the fifteenth lunar asterism (Svati), how could the beautiful maidens bedeck themselves with them (1696-1700)'P How could we have known the musical notes, if they did not come out of the musical instruments? If there were no flowers, how could anyone have smelled their fragrance? If the daintees were not so sweet, how could the tongue know their flavour? Were there no mirror, how could the eyes see their own form? How could the disciple worship the preceptor, if he did not appear in a manifest form? In the same way, if this infinite Brahman

had not been encompassed within seven hundred verses, who could have comprehended it? The cloud, draining up water from the sea, sends showers of rain and so the whole world looks to them with hope. For who could look to the sea which is unlimited and which does not increase or diminish (1701-1705)? Had not sage Vyasa written these beautiful verses, who could have heard or read this theme which transcends speech?

Sage Vyasa has done a great favour to the world by giving the discourse of Lord Krishna in the form of a book and I am now bringing out the same book in the Marathi language, after a full scrutiny of the words of Vyasa. A meek person like me is babbling about the meaning of the Gita, which baffled even the intellect of Vyasa. But this divine Gita is so guileless that she accepts the floral wreath in the form of Vyasa's discourse, but would not reject the sacred Doob grass offered by me (1706-1710). Herds of elephants go to the sea to drink water, but does that sea deny water to the sand-flies? The eagle with a mighty sweep soars in the sky, but the young birds with new wings, who are not able to fly; hover also in the same sky. If the swan walks with a stately gait, does it mean that others should not walk in their own style? If a pitcher takes in water according to its capacity, should not others take a mouthful of water? A torch sheds more light because of its greater size, but does not the wick give light according to its own capacity, (1711-1715)? The sky has a large reflection in the sea because of its wide expanse; but does it not get reflected in a small pond? In the same way it does not stand to reason that' talented persons like Vyasa should interpret Lord Krishna's discourse and I should do nothing about it. Because aquatic animals as big as the Mandara mountain dwell in the sea, should not the smaller Ash swim there? Arjuna (the Sun's charioteer) sees the sun as he is close to him; so should not the ant on the earth look at him? So it will not be improper if ordinary persons like me should write a commentary on the Gita in the local language (1716-1720). If a child follows the footprints of its father, will it not reach the same destination as its father? As I am following in the footsteps of sage Vyasa and consulting the commentator (Shri Shankara) which way to go, where can I, though unworthy, reach if not the right place?

In my heart dwells my mighty preceptor, Shri Nivrittinatha, who has placed the whole world under his obligation. Because of his forbearance the earth bears the movable and immovable world without complaint. The moon borrows his ambrosia and cools down the world and the sun takes over a part of his splendour and dispels the darkness. From him the sea derives its water, the water its sweetness, the sweetness its beauty, (1721-1725) the wind its force, the sky its expanse and knowledge its brilliant sovereign glory, the Vedas their eloquence, happiness its fervour and all things their respective forms, Moreover my capable and worthy Guru Shri Nivrittimath, who favours all, has entered my heart and dwells in it. Then what wonder is there if I tell in the local language the Gita which is already there? Ekalavya, a hunter made an idol of his preceptor Dronacharya and installing his image on the mountain, learnt archery from him and won fame in all the three worlds for his valour (1726-1730). The trees which

are close to sandalwood trees become fragrant like them and the ochre-coloured garment of sage Vasishkha, which was spread out for drying up, challenged the splendour of the sun. As for myself, I have an attentive mind, and my Guru is a great saint who has the power to grant his disciple his status by a favourable glance. If good sight is backed by sun's light, what thing is there which cannot be seen? So even my respiration will produce metrical numbers. What cannot be wrought by the grace of the Guru? I have, therefore, explained the substance of the Gita in the local language in a lucid style and brought it within the reach of everybody. (1731-1735)

Even if this version of the Gita in the local language is not sung, it would not suffer any deficiency. One who sings it will earn great merit. But if one were to recite these verses (ovis) without singing, they would not lose their charm. The ornaments look beautiful as they are, even if they are not worm by a beautiful damsel. But it is proper to wear them on a body. Whether the pearls are strung on gold or kept loose, they look equally gorgeous. The full-blown roundish jasmine flowers in the spring season are equally fragrant, whether they are formed into a wreath or kept loose. (1736-1740) So I have composed this work in ovi metre which, if set to music, will be found captivating or 1f recited, will hold one spell-bound. In these verses I have interwoven letters and given them such flavour of Brahman that they will be appreciated by both the young and the old. Now just as it is not necessary to wait for the sandalwood tree to flower in order to get its fragrance, so as soon as a person hears the recital of this metrical composition; he will get into samadhi (abstract meditation). Then will he not be enthralled by the exposition of its meaning? Even if he recites it casually, his learning will blossom and give him such sweet pleasure that he will not even remember the sweetness of nectar (1741-1745). The poetical merit of this work will give him more benefit than meditation and deep contemplation. Its mere hearing will yield to any person divine bliss and also give satisfaction to the other senses. The clever chakora bird enjoys the moonbeams through its inherent power, but others also can enjoy the moonlight. Only those who understand the inner purport of this metaphysical work will become fit for its study; while ordinary people will enjoy its literary merit. I owe this all to my Guru Shri Nivrittinatha and so it is not my composition, but is the glory of his favour. (1746-1750)

This secret Lord Shiva uttered in the ears of Parvati somewhere in the milky sea and it was heard by Matsyendrknatha who was hiding in the stomach of a Ash in that sea. Matsyendranath met crippled Chouranglnatha on the Saptashringi mountain and by his mere glance made him sound in all his limbs. Then in order to enjoy samadhi undisturbed, he transferred the yogic planes achieved by him to Gorakshanatha. He installed in his chair Gorakshanatha, who was the lake containing the lotus-creeper in the form of yoga and the unique hero capable of vanquishing the sense-objects (1751-1755). Then Gahininatha received from Gorakshanatha the bliss of non-dualism, which had descended from Lord Shiva. Seeing that the people of the world were afflicted by worldly existence, he gave a mandate to his disciple Shri Nivrittinatha that he should embrace the tradition

(sampradaya) which had come down through unbroken succession of teacher-disciple relation beginning with Lord Shiva and protect immediately all beings stricken with Kali (the age of Strife personified). Nivrittinatha was naturally tender-hearted, and had now received his mission from his Guru. He came forward like a cloud in the rainy season to coo) the world (1756-1760). Then moved with compassion at the sight of the people in distress, he showered the serene sentiment on them under the pretext of narrating the purport of the Gita. At that time I stood before him like a chataka bird in distress, and he raised me to the peak of fame. In this way, my Master entrusted to me his wealth of samadhi and so this work has come to me in succession from the Guru to the disciple.

I had neither recited nor read the scriptures, and nor did I know how to serve my Master; how then could I have attained the capacity to compose this work? But the Guru, by making me an instrument, has protected this world through this composition. (1761-1765) If my narration has been superfluous or inadequate, you may please overlook it as a mother would do. I hardly know how to use a word correctly, how to broach a subject methodically or how to employ figures of speech. I talk as my Master guides me, just as a puppet depends for its gesticulations upon the movements given to it (by the puppeteer). So I do not press you to praise the merits or forgive the lapses in this work, as I have been inspired by my Guru to compose it. And if my narration is found by this august audience of you saints to be deficient, it will be all your fault (1766-1770). If the iron does not lose its base quality even after it comes into contact with the philosopher's stone, who is to blame for that? All that the stream can do is to join the Ganga; then if it does not become one with the river, whose fault is it? Through my great goad fortune. I have come to your feet, what then do I lack in the world? Through the grace of my preceptor, I am enjoying your company and so all my desires are fulfilled.

Having a parental home like yours, I have been able to finish this work and have fulfilled my cherished desire. (1771-1775) It might become possible to make the earth-globe entirely of gold, or to create seven mountains out of wish-fulfilling gems or All up the seven sees with nectar, nor would it be difficult to make all the stars into moons or to make pleasure-gardens of wish-fulfilling trees. But it is extremely difficult tolerate the secret meaning of the Gita. It was because of you that a dumb fellow like me has been able to tell you the import of the Gita in the local language in such a way that it will enchant all people. It is through your grace that I have been able to cross this vast sea in the form of this composition and to dance like a big-wig on the other shore, parading the banner of victory (1776-1780). It is through your grace that I have been able to build this temple in the form of the interpretation of the Gita, which looks like the Mount Meru with its high peaks and to instal therein the image of my preceptor and worship it.

The Gita is a guileless mother and I am its infant, who has been separated from her and has been wandering at random. It is your duty, O saints, to bring about a meeting between us two. Shri Jnanadeva says 'Whatever I have spoken is sound

and the credit for all this goes to you. Because of you this festive occasion of the completion of this work has come to pass, fulfilling my life's dream. I had extreme faith in you and you have made me happy by fulfilling all my expectations (1781-1785). O my Master, you have made me create this second universe in the form of this work, and that makes me mock at sage Vishwamitra who created a transient world for Trishanku simply to demean god Brahma. But this literary creation of mine will live for ever.

Lord Shiva created the milky sea out of affection for Upamanyu; but this sea contained poison and- so is not At to be compared with this work. When the people sought protection from the sun against the demon in the form of darkness, he gave them relief from their trouble; but while doing so he makes the people suffer from heat. The moon pours down moonshine to cool down the heat-stricken world; but how can we compare this work with the moon which has dark spots on it (1786-1790)? The work which you saints have enabled me to compose for the benefit of the three worlds is peerless. It is due to your grace that this sermon with music and singing *(kirtana)* has come to an end. All that remains to be done is to render service to you.

Now may the Supreme Self be pleased with the sacrifice in the form of this literary work and grant me this grace. May the wicked drop their evil ways and become inclined towards good deeds and may all beings develop friendship for one another. May the darkness in the form of sin in the world vanish, and let there be the dawn of religious duty. May the desires of all beings be fulfilled (1791-1795). May the concourse of saints who shower auspiciousness on the universe appear and visit perpetually all beings on this earth. May these saints, who are like walking wisp-yielding trees, and the abodes of sentient philosophers' stones or talking oceans of nectar, and who are like spotless moons or heatless suns be the constant kinsmen of all. In short, let all the three worlds be perfectly happy and may everyone desire to offer perpetual worship to the Primeval person (Brahman) and may those who follow the teachings of this work have perfect happiness in this and the next world. (1796-1880) Hearing these words, the Lord of the universe said, "I grant you this grace", at which Jnanadeva became very happy with this boon.

In this Kali age, there is a holy and ancient place called Panchakrosha (Newase) on the southern bank of the river Godavari in the state of Maharashtra, where dwells the goddess Mahalaya (also named Mohiniraja), who pulls the strings of the world. There rules most justly king Ramadevray, the crown gem of the Yadu race, who is the abode of all arts. At that time Jnanadeva, the disciple of Shri Nivrittinatha, claiming succession of discipleship from Lord Shiva, gave the Gita the garb of Marathi language. (1801-1805) This beautiful dialogue which took place between Lord Krishna and Arjuna occurs in the Bhishmaparva of the Mahabharata. It contains the quintessence of the Upanishadic knowledge and is the parental home of all shastras. It is verily the Manasa lake, which is resorted to by the swans in the form of ascetics of the highest order (Paranmhansas). I,

Jnanadeva, the disciple of Nivrittinatha, now declare that this eighteenth chapter, which is the pinnacle of the dialogue, ends here. May the religious merit of this work bring full happiness day by day to all beings in this world. Jnanadeva composed this commentary on the Gita in the (Shalivahana) shaka year 1212 and Sachchidanandababa became his reverent amanuensis. (1806-1810)

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